

The Final

A quarterly magazine for a better knowledge
about Imam Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam

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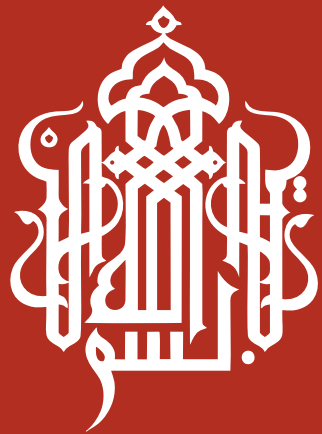
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Imam Mahdi



- Imam Hussain's Narrations about Imam Mahdi
- Common Purposes of Imam Hussain and Imam Mahdi
- A Correlation between Āshūrā and Mahdism
- Teenage Corner

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قَالَ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «مِنَّا إِثْنَا
عَشَرَ مَهْدِيًّا أَوْلَهُمْ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَآخِرُهُمْ
التَّاسِعُ مِنْ وُلْدِي وَهُوَ الْإِمَامُ الْقَائِمُ بِالْحَقِّ...»

(بحارالانوار ج 51، ص 133.)

It is narrated from Imam Hussain to have said,
«Among us (the Household of the Prophet) there
are twelve Mahdis (divinely guided men) the first
of which is the Commander of the Faithful Ali bin
Abī Tālib and the last one is the ninth of my prog-
eny who is a leader who will establish the right (in
the world)...»

(Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 133.)



The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

To remember Imam Mahdi constantly reminds us that rising the sun of the Right and Justice is a decisive matter at the end of this dark night. Sometimes, when men see the dense waves of darkness and oppression, they may become despaired... Of course, there are darkness, oppressors, and darkness makers; and they have been existent for centuries, but certainly, there is sunrise at the end of this dark night. That is what the belief in the Imam of the Age teaches us. This is the guaranteed promise of Allah in the following of the supplication, when we address the Imam by saying,

«السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلَمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ وَالْعِلْمُ الْمَصْبُوبُ وَالْعَوْتُ وَالرَّحْمَةُ الْوَاسِعَةُ وَعَدَا غَيْرَ مَكْذُوبٍ»¹.

“Peace be upon you, O the installed flag (of Islam), and the one who is filled with knowledge, and the help, and the far-reaching mercy, a promise which is not a lie.”

This is Allah’s unfailing promise. We say at the beginning of the supplication:

«السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي صَمِنَهُ»².

“Peace be upon you o the promise of Allah which He has guaranteed.”

His Majesty’s appearance is the meaning of this guaranteed promise. Believers in the appearance and existence of the Imam of the Age (May our souls be at his ransom) never give up, and they know that this sun will rise and eliminate the darkness.

1. Ziyārat Āl-e- Yāsīn.

2. Ibid.



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Chief Director
Mujtabā Kalbāsī

Editor in Chief
Sayyed ‘Abd-al-Mahdi Tavakol

Editorial Board
The experts in the Specialized
Center of Mahdism

Translators
Hamid Sa’adat
Y. Rafī’ee
N. Bahrānī
F. Bahrānī
Z. Karīmzādeh

Graphic Designer
Mohammad Hussein Hamedānīan

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Editorial

There is an unbreakable connection between Āshūrā and waiting for the appearance of Imam Mahdi. If Imam Hussain existed now, nobody could accept his invitation in Karbala, or could address him by saying,

«فَيَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَكُمْ فَأَفُوزَ مَعَكُمْ».¹

“I wish I were with you so that I would be fortunate with you.” unless he were in the right way.

It is said;

«كُلُّ يَوْمٍ عَاشُورَا».

“Every day is Āshūrā.” that means every day is a Confrontation between right and wrong; bad and good in sayings, writings, behaviours, and so on. The world is like a farm and a place of trade; and those who live godly receive fortunate and salvation, as it is narrated by the Prophet to have said,

«كَمَا تَعِيشُونَ تَمُوتُونَ».²

“You will die as you live!” Good people die in a good way, and bad ones die badly.

Someone who chooses goodness, is with Imam Hussain, even if he – for whatever reason – was previously on the wrong path. An example of such a man is Hurr who was against Imam Hussain and his

1. Bihār al- Anwār, vol. 98, p. 200.

2. `Avālī al-La`ālī, vol. 4, p. 72.



companions at the beginning, but he felt sorry at the right moment, repented of his sins, and finally became martyred while he was fending the adversaries of Imam Hussain.

To be with Imam Hussain requires that one be strong in front of deceptive attractions and desires showing off themselves in this temporal world in the form of carnal desires, wealth, and important but Satanic posts and jobs. One should not prefer any artificial guarantees except “Imam Hussain’s guarantee”. One has to know the right and be right-oriented. One should know his human and his divine duties and act upon them without any fault.

Today, being neutral, impartial, and indifferent in life and being unaware of the requirements of the current time, is not in congruence

with the lifestyle of Imam Hussain and Imam Mahdi. The duties of thinkers, scholars, propagandists, and all the enthusiastic supporters of Imam Hussain’s culture is to prepare the setting of his son’s advent. One should live like Imam Hussain, and rise like Imam Mahdi, tirelessly. Man should be an example of this saying,

«الدُّعَاةُ إِلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا»¹.

“Those who invite to Allah openly and in secret.”

Editor in Chief: Sayyed 'Abd-al-Mahdi Tavakol
Smtavakol@gmail.com

1. Bihār al- Anwār, vol. 52, p. 122.



During the time of Occultation, those who wanted to be more guided have to try to know their Imam better.

Imam Mahdi in the Quran

Surah Maryam, verse 75

Addressing the Prophet, Allah in the 75th verse of Surah Maryam says,

﴿قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَ إِمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ جُنْدًا﴾

“Say (to people), ‘Whoever is in error - let the Most Merciful extend for him an extension (in wealth and time) until when they see that which they were promised - either punishment [in this world]

or the Hour (of resurrection) - they will come to know who is worst in position and weaker in soldiers.’”

This verse contains a form of divine retribution for the deviate people who have been given an extended wealth and a lot of chance in this world, but they misused them and added to their corruption and even perverted others. Allah here makes them informed that their time will come to an abrupt end.

Then in the following verse, Allah talks about those who wanted to stay firm and guided and says,



An explanatory narration:

«عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: «...أَمَّا قَوْلُهُ (حَتَّى إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ) فَهُوَ خُرُوجُ الْقَائِمِ وَهُوَ السَّاعَةُ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ وَمَا نَزَلَ بِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَلَى يَدَيْ قَائِمِهِ فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ (مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا) يَعْنِي عِنْدَ الْقَائِمِ (وَ أضعفُ جُنداً) قُلْتُ قَوْلُهُ (وَ يَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى) قَالَ يَزِيدُهُمْ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ هُدًى عَلَى هُدًى بِاتِّبَاعِهِمُ الْقَائِمَ حَيْثُ لَا يَجْحَدُونَهُ وَ لَا يُنْكِرُونَهُ»¹

Abū Basīr narrates from Imam al-Sādiq (the sixth Imam of Shia) to have said, "...In this verse 'until, when they see that which they were promised' refers to the time that the Upriser (Imam al-Mahdi) arises and those who are in their error will face that time soon and will realize what would happen to them of divine punishment by the hands of Allah's Upriser. This is the meaning of the words of Allah saying 'they will come to know who is worst in position and weaker in soldiers' and they will know it when the Upriser

1. 'Usūl al-Kāfi, Vol. 1, p. 431, hadith 90.

﴿وَ يَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى وَ الْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَ خَيْرٌ مَرَدًّا﴾

"And Allah increases guidance to those who were guided, and the enduring good deeds are better to your Creator and Nurturer for reward and better for recourse."

comes.” Then, the narrator of this tradition adds that he asked the Imam about the meaning of this part of the verse where Allah says: “*And Allah increases those who were guided in guidance*” and the Imam replied, “Allah will increase the guidance for people who were guided because they have decided to follow the Upriser and not to disobey or reject him.”

So, when the Imam comes it is a time that one of the examples of the mentioned verses comes into existence and Allah will make the dignity of the believers and the abjection of non-believers completely manifest.

Points:

1. The chance for those who are in their error will not last forever: Allah gives everyone enough time to decide for what he wants to do and people out of their free will can choose what to do. But if they decide to misuse this given fortune, they should know that it won't last for them forever. There, of course, will be a time when they will realize how weak they have been even though they have enjoyed a lot of power and time. This is a promise from Allah and it will never fail. When Imam Mahdi arises, this divine promise will be accomplished fully and it will be the time of a complete victory of believers over non-believers.

2. The appearance of the Imam will take place abruptly: The Imam will arise suddenly; therefore, it is necessary for those who want to accompany him to be prepared in advance. No one should think that since the time of appearance is delayed for a long time it also may last too much longer as well. Those who want to do something positive should decide on it before it is too late.

3. When the Imam comes Allah will add to His blessings to the believers: Based on the abovementioned narration, Allah promises the believers that at the time of the Imam's advent *He will increase those who were guided in guidance*. This promise will take place at that time since there is no injustice, corruption, or oppression in the world. The Imam will make the world a good place for those who want to be guided to practice their religious duties.

4. Guidance is not separated from following someone: No one can be guided by himself without having recourse to divine leaders. Guidance in this verse is attributed to Allah which means Allah should help man to be guided. However, this guidance is done through some special ways the best of which is an Imam. Consequently, the more one knows his Imam and follows the divine leaders the more he will be guided. During the time of Occultation, those who wanted to be more guided have to try to know their Imam better.



Special Deputies of Imam Mahdi The Second Special Deputy of Imam Mahdi



At the same time, he followed up the works of the first representative and tried to prove the existence of the hidden Imam for trusted ones among the Shias.

Preface

As stated in the previous issue of this magazine, Islamic sources contain many Hadiths reported from the Prophet and the Imams on the happening of the Occultation and its relating issues especially dividing it into two parts: *Minor occultation* and *Major occultation*.¹ During the period of Minor occultation, people were in contact with the 12th Imam through his appointed deputies who were few special and selected people among the Shias and had the permission to meet Imam Mahdi whenever the need arose. They called *Special* because the infallible Imam appointed them as his deputies. To explain it, the first one of Imam Mahdi's special rep-

1. Al-Ghaybah, by Nu'mānī, p. 175.

resentative was introduced to people by the previous Imam (Imam 'Askarī) and then the next deputy was introduced to people by the order of Imam Mahdi and through the previous deputy, etc.

In the following, we take a look at the biography and the significant role of Imam Mahdi's second special representative, Abū Ja'far Muhammad bin 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī (d. 305 A.H / 917 A.D). He was the second special deputy of Imam Mahdi. His father's name is 'Uthmān and his grandfather's name is Sa'īd. Because of his father, 'Amrī is added to his name and he is known as Muhammad bin 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī. His cognomen is Abū Ja'far, and his titles are 'Amrī, 'Askarī, Asadī, and Sammān.

Proofs of his deputyship

Like his father, Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān was among the trustworthy companions of the 11th Imam. He was a genius of his time, with great piety, God-wariness, and moral virtues. In this regard, Imam Hassan al-‘Askarī declares to one of his close companions, Ahmad bin Ishāq al-Qummī, when he asked the Imam about the representative to whom should refer after the demise of the Imam,

«الْعَمْرِيُّ وَابْنُهُ ثِقَتَانِ فَمَا آدَا إِلَيْكَ عَنِّي فَعَنِّي يُؤَدِّيَانِ وَمَا قَالَا لَكَ فَعَنِّي يَقُولَانِ فَاسْمَعْهُمَا وَأَطِعْهُمَا فَإِنَّهُمَا الثَّقَتَانِ الْمُتَأَمُونَانِ».¹

“*Amrī (‘Uthmān bin Sa’īd) and his son (Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān) are both reliable and trustworthy. Whatever they both convey to you from me they indeed convey it from me; and whatever they tell you is also from me; so, listen to them and obey what they say for they are reliable and trustworthy.*”

In another situation, when a group of Shia from Yemen visited Imam ‘Askari, he called ‘Uthmān b. Sa’īd (father of Muhammad bin ‘Uthman) and mentioned his deputyship and said,

«...إشْهَدُوا عَلَيَّ أَنَّ عَثْمَانَ بْنَ سَعِيدٍ الْعَمْرِيَّ وَكَيْلِي وَأَنَّ ابْنَهُ مُحَمَّدًا وَكَيْلِي إِنِّي مَهْدِيكُمْ».²

“...*Witness that ‘Uthmān b. Sa’īd (first deputy) is my deputy and his son Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān is the deputy of my son, Mahdi.*”

Muhammad bin Uthmān was trusted as a religious authority for the people during the time of the Imamate of Imam ‘Askarī so

1. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaykh al-Tūsī, p. 360.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 345.

that, people came to him to ask their questions. This situation continued after the martyrdom of that Imam ad during the period of his father’s deputyship. He was one of the active members of the network of agents during his father’s lifetime. When his father (the first special deputy) passed away in 266 A.H/ 880 A.D, Muhammad was given the responsibility for Shias’ affairs through a consolatory letter from Imam Mahdi on the demise of his father. Its contents were as follows:

«إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ تَسْلِيمًا لِأَمْرِهِ وَرَضَى بِقَضَائِهِ عَاشَ أَبُوكَ سَعِيدًا وَمَاتَ حَمِيدًا... رُزِيتَ وَرُزِينَا وَأَوْحَشَكَ فِرَاقَهُ وَأَوْحَشَنَا فَسَرَّهُ اللهُ فِي مُنْقَلَبِهِ وَكَانَ مِنْ كَمَالِ سَعَادَتِهِ أَنْ رَزَقَهُ اللهُ وَلَدًا مِثْلَكَ يَخْلُفُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَيَقُومُ مَقَامَهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَيَتَرَحَّمُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَقُولُ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنَّ الْأَنْفُسَ طَيِّبَةً بِمَكَانِكَ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ فِيكَ وَعِنْدَكَ أَعَانَكَ اللهُ وَقَوْلِكَ وَعَضْدَكَ وَوَفَّقَكَ وَكَانَ لَكَ وَلِيًّا وَحَافِظًا وَرَاعِيًّا».¹

“*We have come from Allah and unto Him shall we return (the Quran). We accept His orders and are satisfied with His commands. Your father passed a decent life and faced a decent death... You are grief-stricken, so are we; his death has affected us as much as it has affected you. May God make him happier in that life! It was due to his sincerity and decency that he was honored with a son like you who has become his heir and successor. May God send mercies upon him! I praise the Almighty since the hearts of our followers (the Shias) are at ease with you and with what God has entrusted to you. May God help you, strengthen your power and might, support you in your affairs, give you more fortune in what*

1. Kamāl al-Dīn, vol. 1, p. 510.

you do and be your guardian, protector, and assistant.”

In the opinion of Twelver Shi’a, these unerring signs clearly show that Muhammad bin Uthmān was appointed and introduced as the representative of Imam Mahdi by both Imam ‘Askarī and Imam Mahdi. Beyond that, he gave people some letters from Imam Mahdi. These letters were in the uniform handwriting and with the same characteristics as the previous ones. Thus, the agents or non-specific representatives could find out about his truthfulness and connection with Imam Mahdi. Also, sometimes he prepared the ground for some agents to visit the Imam, and the Imam always told them, “Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān is my deputy.”¹

In short, the reasons for his deputyship include the following:

1. As mentioned before, in a letter, Imam Hasan al-‘Askarī introduced him and his father as reliable people and trusted by himself.
2. In addition to considering Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān reliable, Imam al-‘Askarī referred to his being representative of his son, Imam Mahdi, “*Bear witness that ‘Uthman b. Sa‘id ‘Amrī is my representative, and his son, Muhammad is representative of my son, Mahdi.*”
3. He gave people some letters from Imam Mahdi. These letters were in the uniform handwriting and with the same characteristics as the previous ones. Thus, the agents or representatives could find out about his truthfulness and connection with Imam Mahdi.
4. Sometimes he prepared the ground for some agents or representatives’ visiting with Imam Mahdi, and the Imam always told them, “*Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān is my deputy.*”

1. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh al-Tūsī, p. 362.

Opinions of scholars

We have already gauged the great state of the second special deputy of Imam Mahdi in the beginning through the sayings of the Imams. Hereunder, are the opinions of some great Shiite scholars: Shaykh al-Tūsī writes in his book of Rijāl, “*Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘id al-‘Amrī, his agnomen is Abu Ja‘far and that of his father is Abū Amr. Both of them were the representatives of Imam Mahdi and had an esteemed position among the Twelver Shia.*”¹ A similar narration is recorded by ‘Allāmah Hillī in his book on Rijāl.²

Also, Māmqānī mentioned the great position and high status of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān is renowned and does not need any explanation and proof.

While studying the conditions of the life of his father it becomes evident that he during the life of his father itself had received the testimonial of being the representative of Imam Mahdi after his father.³

Also, Ayatullah al-‘Uzmā Sayyid Abū l-Qāsim al-Khūyī writes,

«وَالرَّوَايَاتُ فِي جَلَالَتِهِ وَعَظَمَةِ مَقَامِهِ مُتَظَافِرَةٌ»⁴.

“*The traditions that have been narrated regarding the majesty and greatness of his position are numerous.*”

1. Rijāl, Shaikh al-Tūsī p. 447.

2. Khulāsāt al-Aqvāl, p. 250.

3. Tanqīh al-Maqāl, vol. 3, p. 149.

4. Mu‘jam Rijāl al-Hadīth, vol. 17, p. 294.

Some extraordinary acts of Imam Mahdi's second deputy

Some scholars of Rijāl have also called Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān as a compiler and author. Hence a famous saying is narrated as follows, Ibn-e Nūh quotes from Abū Nasr, the nephew of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān, that the second special deputy had written many books, one of which was on jurisprudence in which he has collected all the traditions from Imam Hassan al-‘Askari, Imam Mahdi, and from his father ‘Uthman bin Sa’īd who in turn has narrated from the tenth and the eleventh Imam. Among these books is a woman titled as al-Ashribah Umm-e Kulthūm, the daughter of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān, who narrates, “This book as per the will of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān had reached to the third deputy Hussain bin Rūh. Abū Nasr who says, “I assume that after Hussain bin Rūh it must have been passed on to the fourth deputy Abū al-Hassan Ali bin Muhammad Samurī.”¹

The late Ayatullah al-‘Uzmā Khūyī writes after this narration that the abovementioned narration proves two things: Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān is an author of books; and he has narrated traditions from both Imam Hassan al-‘Askarī and Imam Mahdi. More than this, some famous sayings of Imam Mahdi such as the supplications of Samāt and Iftitāh and Ziyārat Āl-e Yāsīn are Narrated through him.² Like other deputies, his other works included paying people’s problems, answering their legal issues, and delivering people’s letters to the 12th Imam and getting his responses to them.

1. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh al-Tūsī, p. 363.

2. Misbāh al-Mutahajjid, vol. 1, p. 417.

Among his other services was struggling against and defeating the false pretenders to the deputyship. Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān was the special deputy of Imam Mahdi for about forty years, and false claims to deputyship were rampant at that time. During this period some selfish and opportunistic people tried to take advantage of this and claimed to be the deputy of Imam Mahdi.

We mention below the names of some of those imposters who advanced such claims during the deputyship of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān:

1. Abū Muhammad Hassan Sharī’ī. [He is the first person who falsely claimed the deputyship from Imam Mahdi and a curse was issued on him in a letter from the Imam. The Shiites also cursed him and hated him. Eventually, his work turned to infidelity and atheism].¹
2. Muhammad bin Nasīr Numayrī. [It is narrated that Imam ‘Askarā sent a letter to his companion ‘Ubaidī and in that letter, he announced his disgust with Muhammad bin Nasīr and saying: “You and all our lovers, stay away from him and I curse him and may Allah curse him!].²
3. Ahmad bin Hilāl Abartā’ī.
4. Muhammad bin Ali bin Bilāl.
5. Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Ahmad bin ‘Uthmān.
6. Ishāq bin Ahmar.
7. Bāqatānī.
8. Hussain bin Mansūr al-Hallāj.³

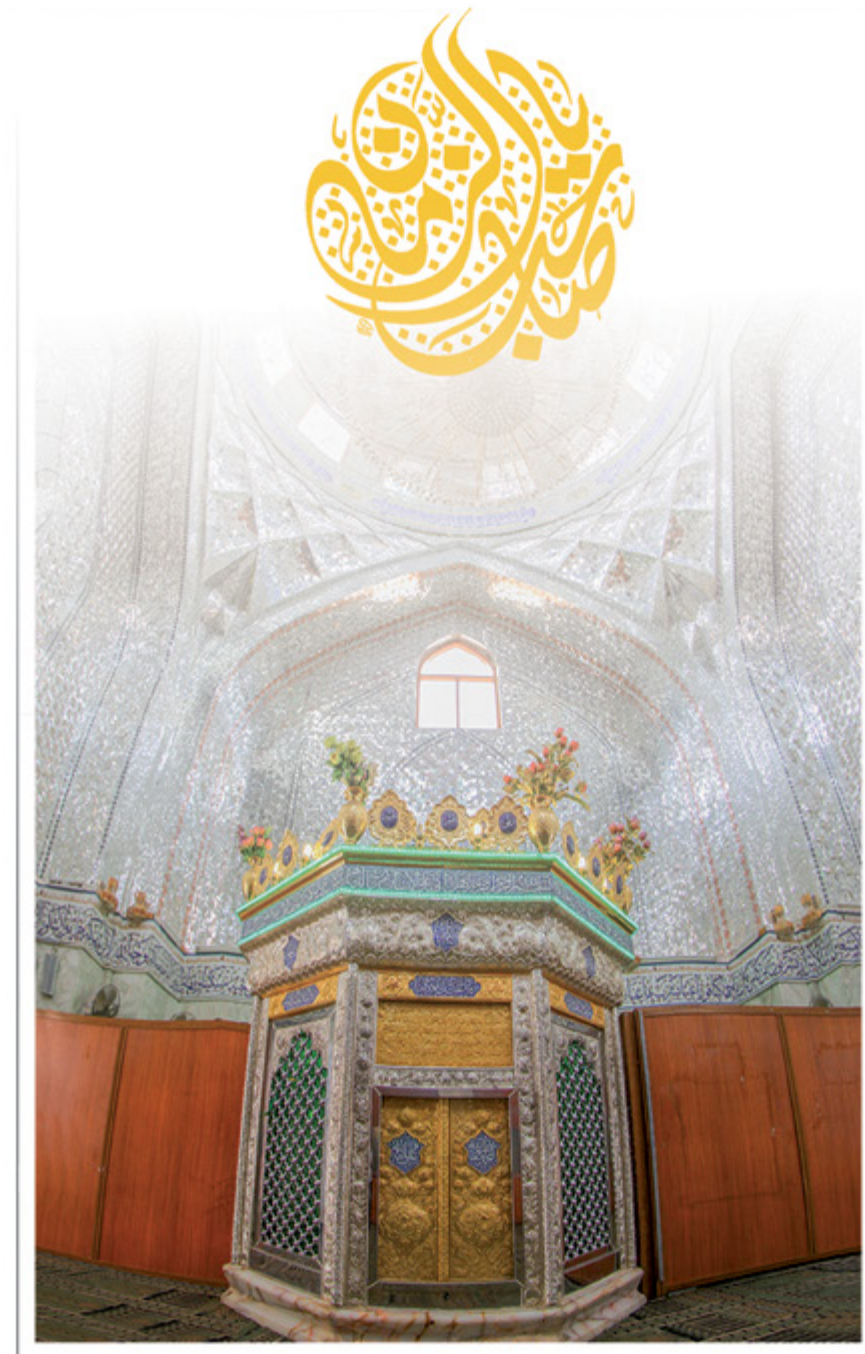
1. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh Tūsī, vol. 1, p. 397.

2. Rijāl, by Najāshī, vol. 2, p. 805.

3. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh al-Tūsī, pp. 397-415.

It is noteworthy that all of them rivaled Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān and refuted his deputyship. Their beliefs were distorted and their faith was weak. They were declared as fanatical and wretched during the period of the tenth Imam (Imam Hādī) and Imam Hasan al-Askarī itself. By this, we can easily gauge the extent of their jealousy towards Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān and the problems they posed in his work. But he dealt with them all with the help of Imam and fulfilled all his duties. In fact, during Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān’s period, the false claimants wanted to deceive the people and desired to usurp the obligatory religious tax (Khums and Zakāt) from them. They nearly injured the Imam’s second deputy. It was a difficult trial for the people in that era to recognize the true deputy of Imam Mahdi. Under such circumstances to win the confidence of the people and overcome the enemies was a gigantic task.

Despite the problems of Abū Ja’far due to the existence of false deputies, he continued the hidden activities of the organization of agents and expanded its roles among the Twelver Shia. At the same time, he followed up the works of the first representative and tried to prove the existence of the hidden Imam for trusted ones among the Shias. He disseminated this opinion among the Twelver Shia that occultation of Imam Mahdi has been done by the order of Allah; and hadiths of previous Imams supported it and that he –Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān– was the true representative of the Imam. Moreover, he tried to follow up the responsibilities of the first representative without being harassed by the Abbasid government. Therefore, he reinforced the belief made among Abbasids supported by the first representative that Imam al-’Askarī passed away without a suc-



cessor.¹ He was hopeful that this way, the government would be convinced that there would be no uprisings because Twelver Shia had no twelfth Imam to gather around him to be guided and by this conception, they would give up any measure against Shi'a.

In fact, during Muhammad bin 'Uthmān's period, some selfish and opportunistic people tried to take advantage of this and claimed to be the deputy of Imam Mahdi. They wanted to deceive people and desired to usurp the religious payments (like Khums and Zakāt) from them. The period of Muhammad bin 'Uthmān's deputyship was quite lengthy and as we have already mentioned that in this period, he served as a sanctuary for the Shias. He solved numerous issues related to jurisprudence, society, and belief. During his deputyship, all that has been received by him from Imam Mahdi in the form of Tawqī' (Signed letters from the side of the Imam) is present in different books under different topics.² The plan of the second deputy about the existence of the hidden Imam can be seen in some narrations. Once, a person from Hamdān asked Abū Ja'far about the successor of Imam al-'Askarī. He answered, "Imam al-'Askarī passed away and left among you a successor whose neck is like this." And then he showed the size of a neck of an adolescent to indicate that the son of the eleventh Imam was of such an age.³

Another time later, Abu Ja'far told him,

1. Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh al-Tūsī, p. 233.

2. Kamāl al-Dīn, vol. 2, p. 505; Al-Ghaybah, by Shaikh al-Tūsī, p. 309.

3. Al-Kāfi, vol. 1, pp. 329-331.

«وَاللَّهِ إِنَّ صَاحِبَ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ يَخْضُرُ الْمَوْسِمَ كُلَّ سَنَةٍ فَيَرَى النَّاسَ وَيَعْرِفُهُمْ وَيَرُونَهُ وَلَا يَعْرِفُونَهُ».¹

"I swear by Allah, Sāhib al-'Amr (the master of the thing) comes to Mecca every year to perform the rituals of Hajj. He sees people and recognizes them, but they do not recognize him (even if they see him.)"

He added that he had seen Imam Mahdi in Ka'ba while the Imam had grasped the cloth of the Ka'ba and was reciting this request,

«اللَّهُمَّ اِنْتَقِمْ بِي مِنْ اَعْدَائِكَ».²

"O Allah! Take revenge by me from Your enemies".

He also witnessed Imam Mahdi in Masjid al-Harām (The Sacred Mosque) near the Ka'ba praying,

«اللَّهُمَّ اُنْجِزْ لِي مَا وَعَدْتَنِي».³

"O Allah! Fulfill the promise that You have made unto me."

Although Abū Ja'far proved the existence of the Twelfth Imam for the Shias, he warned them not to insist on discovering his name, since government officials were convinced that Imam al-'Askarī had passed away without a successor; and if they found the name and place of the last Imam, they would search for him and the life of him and his deputies would be endangered. Other reports suggest that the second representative of the Imam gave the same order to other agents.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 152.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 351.

3. Kamāl al-Dīn, vol. 2, p. 440.

According to another narration, Abū Ali Muhammad bin Hammām says,

« وَكَتَبْتُ أَسْأَلُهُ عَنْ ظُهُورِ الْفَرَجِ فَخَرَجَ فِي التَّوَقُّعِ كَذَبَ الْوَقَاتُونَ »¹

“I sent a letter to Imam Mahdi through the second deputy enquiring about the time of his appearance. He informed, Those who fix the time of my appearance are liars.”

Duration of representation

Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān was the special deputy of Imam al-Mahdi for 40 years since 265 A.H. / 878 A.D. till 305 A.H. / 917 A.D. Following is the list of Abbasid caliphs who ruled during the deputyship of Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān:

1. Mu‘tamid Billah (256 A.H. - 279 A.H.)
2. Mu‘tazid Billah (279 A.H. - 289 A.H.)
3. Muktafi Billah (289 A.H. - 295 A.H.)
4. Muqtadir Billah (295 A.H. - 320 A.H.).

His demise

As per the available records, the second special deputy of Imam Mahdi (Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān) died in Jamādi al-‘ulā (305 A. H./ 917 A.D.). He had himself informed about his demise two months in advance. Abul Hassan Ali bin Ahmad al-Dallāl al-Qummī narrates, “One day I was with Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān and saw a slate in front of him on which he was making some sketches and writing the verses of the Holy Quran. And in the margins of that tablet,

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 53, p. 184.

he was writing the names of the Imams. I asked him about it. He replied, “This is for my grave and I will be laid on this”.

In another tradition, Abū al-Hasan Ali b. Ahmad says that Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān caught my hand and took me near his grave. After looking at it he said,

‘On such and such date of such and such month of such and such year, I will die and be laid in this grave and this tablet will be with me.’ I remembered his words and waited for that time. Just after a few days he became sick and finally expired on the same day, month, and year which he had prophesied to me and was buried in the same grave which he had shown.’

A similar tradition has also been narrated by Muhammad bin Ali bin ‘Aswadī al-Qummī.¹

His grave is situated in East Baghdad in a clean, posh, and populated area in a mosque, famous as Khallānī. Since that time Shias visit his shrine and recite his supplication (Ziyārat):

« أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ بَابُ الْمَوْجِي... جِئْتُكَ عَارِفًا بِالْحَقِّ الَّذِي أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ وَ أَنَّكَ مَا خُنْتَ فِي التَّادِيَةِ وَ السِّفَارَةِ - السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ بَابٍ مَا أَوْسَعَهُ ».²

“I bear witness that you are the door of mercy of my master (Imam Mahdi)... I have come to you after recognizing your right on which you remained firmly established and I know that you have not breached the trust reposed in your deputyship or in conveying the news. Peace be upon you from a door that is the most expansive door of mercy!”

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 351; Kamā al-Dīn, vol. 2, p. 502.

2. Mafātīh al-Jinān, p. 897.



both uprisings are in continuation of the prophets and righteous people's revolutions over history

Common Purposes of Imam Hussain and Imam Mahdi

Introduction:

In Shiite culture, two uprisings, in which the leaders of both are infallible Imams and from the prophet's offspring, have an outstanding and prominent status: One of them is "Imam Hussain's uprising" which occurred in 61 A.H, and the other one is "the universal revolution of Imam Mahdi" which will take place in the future.

There is an inseparable link between these two uprisings in a way that each one completes the other and is in line with that. The most important feature of both uprisings is that each one forms a "Right" army against the "Wrong" one. Both uprisings consist of members

of the "Right" army, who oppose the "Wrong" one like the agents of corruption, tyrants, atheists, and wealth lovers. Both of them take place to rectify corrupt and destroyed society and their most important aim is to revive transcendent religious and humane teachings of Allah, and to eradicate the obstacles that existed against the human's growth. The religious and political message of these two uprisings is to fight against the tyrant and corrupt governments and not to put up with the despots and dictators; moreover, their main goal is delivering human society to transcendence and ultimate perfection which is nothing but to reach servitude and nearness to Allah; and correcting people's immoral, and unpleasant characters and behaviors. It can be said that both uprisings are in continuation of the prophets and righteous people's revolutions over history; moreover, they themselves were the origin and the source of many other Right-seeking and Wrong-fighting uprisings. In the Shiite's view, the ultimate battle between the Right (light, faith, and goodness) and the Wrong

(infidelity, chaos, and evils) will take place in the advent of Imam Mahdi's era by the time he will rise. Many nations and religions wait for this universal and comprehensive uprising. The promise of this ultimate battle between the Wrong and the Right, which would lead to human salvation is mentioned in all of the Divine books and religions. Thus, a brief study of links between the two uprisings – that are listed here - would be useful to the right-seeking people:

1. Fighting against cruelty and tyranny:

Imam Hussain considers Yazid's government a cause of destroying the religion and states,

«وَعَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ السَّلَامُ إِذْ قَدْ بُلِيَتْ الْأُمَّةُ بِرَأْسِ مِثْلِ يَزِيدٍ»¹

“When the nation gets caught by a leader like Yazid, one must say goodbye to Islam. [Islam will be destroyed.]”

This is why the Imam strongly says,

«مِثْلِي لَا يُبَايِعُ مِثْلَهُ»²

“Someone like me will not pay allegiance to someone like him.”

By his martyrdom, Imam Hussain caused the Umayyad government to be disgraced and consequently overthrown. Likewise, the uprising of Imam Mahdi will cause all the dictator governments to be disgraced and their power to become unstable. As regards to this matter, Imam Hussain states,

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol.1, p. 184.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 44, p. 325.

«يُظْهِرُ اللَّهُ قَائِمَنَا فَيَنْتَقِمُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ»¹

“Our Upriser will rise and will take revenge from the tyrants.”

It is recited in Nudbah supplication (which is one of the major Shi-ite prayers about Imam Mahdi and his occultation.),

«أَيْنَ قَاصِمُ شَوْكَةِ الْمُتَعَدِّينَ، أَيْنَ هَادِمُ أُنْبِيَّةِ الشِّرْكِ وَالتَّفَاقِ، أَيْنَ مُبِيدُ أَهْلِ الْفُسُوقِ وَالْعُضْيَانِ وَالطُّغْيَانِ ... أَيْنَ مُبِيدُ الْعُتَاةِ وَالْمُرَدَّةِ»²

“Where is the one who overwhelms the transgressors` glory? Where is the one who destroys the buildings of polytheism and hypocrisy? Where is the terminator of the people of guilt, vice, and rebellion? Where is the terminator of the rebels and disobedient?”

In fact, just as the Prophet, Imam Ali, and Imam Hussain respectively fought with Abū Sufyān, Muāwiya, and Yazīd, Imam Mahdī will fight with Sufyānī who is the offspring of Abū Sufyān for the sake of faith to Allah, truth, and justice.

2. Seeking reformation

Both Imam Hussain's uprising and Imam Mahdi's revolution are aimed to reform the society. Related to this issue, Imam Hussain states,

«إِنِّي لَمْ أَخْرُجْ أَشْرَاءً وَلَا بَطْرًا وَلَا مُفْسِدًا وَلَا ظَالِمًا، وَإِنَّمَا خَرَجْتُ لِطَلَبِ الْإِصْلَاحِ فِي أُمَّةِ جَدِّي مُحَمَّدٍ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَمْرِيَا لِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَنْهِيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَسِيرُ بِسِيرَةِ جَدِّي مُحَمَّدٍ وَ أَبِي عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ»³

“I did not move because of joy or arrogance neither for making

1. Ithbāt al-Hudā, vol. 3, p. 569.

2. See Mafātih al-Jinān, Nudba Supplication

3. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 44, p. 329.

corruption or cruelty, rather I moved to reform my grandfather`s nation (whose name is) Muhammad. I am going to enjoin the good and prohibit the evil, I want to act in the way of my grandfather, Muhammad, and my father, Ali bin Abī Tālib.”

With respect to reforming the role of Imam Mahdi, it is narrated from the prophet who stated,

«لِيُصْلِحَ الْأُمَّةَ بَعْدَ فَسَادِهَا»¹

“By recourse to Imam Mahdi, Allah will amend this nation after its corruption.”

3. Awakening the nation

The aim of Imam Hussain mentioned in Arba`in supplication is as follows,

«وَبَدَّلَ مُهْجَتَهُ فِيكَ لِيَسْتَنْقِذَ عِبَادَكَ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ وَحَيْرَةِ الضَّلَالَةِ»²

“He sacrificed his blood for the sake of You, to rescue your worshippers from ignorance and bewilderment of misguidance.”

As the same, Imam Mahdi`s goal is to rescue people from mental slavery and to free them from the chains of captivity. It is narrated from the Prophet, regarding Imam Mahdi`s motivation for rising to have said,

«...لِيُصْلِحَ الْأُمَّةَ بَعْدَ فَسَادِهَا»³

“...to reform the nation after its corruption.”

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 83.
2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 101, p. 331.
3. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 83.

4. Restoring religion`s honor

Honor is the basis of Imam Hussain and Imam Mahdi`s motion and it can be the basis of a strategic policy for making a religious government at an international level. Imam Hussain stated on Āshūrā day:

«... هَمِيَّاتٌ مِمَّا الذَّلِيلَةُ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ لَنَا وَرَسُولُهُ وَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَ حُجُورٌ طَابَتْ وَ ظَهْرَتْ وَ أُتُوْفٌ مَمِيَّةٌ وَ نُفُوسٌ أَبِيَّةٌ مِنْ أَنْ نُؤْتِرَ طَاعَةَ اللَّئَامِ عَلَى مَصَارِعِ الْكِرَامِ»¹

“...humiliation is far from us. Allah and His Prophet and the believers and pure intellects and great men of religious zeal deny accepting that for us. They do not let us prefer the obedience of the humble to an honorable death.”

Again, Imam Hussain stated,

«مَوْتُ فِي عَزِّ خَيْرٌ مِنْ حَيَاةٍ فِي ذُلٍّ»²

“Dying in an honorable way is better than living in humiliation.”

Religious government as a government that sets the ground for the dignified Mahdist government, avoids any relation or negotiation with someone or something in which there is a probability of humiliation since the universal government of Imam Mahdi is introduced as the one that only gives honor to the religion. In Eftitāh supplication, it is recited,

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَرْغَبُ إِلَيْكَ فِي دَوْلَةٍ كَرِيمَةٍ تُعِزُّ بِهَا الْإِسْلَامَ وَأَهْلَهُ وَ تُذِلُّ بِهَا التِّغْفَاقَ وَ أَهْلَهُ»³

“O Allah! We are eager towards You to find the dignified govern-

1. Khārazmī Maqṭal, vol. 2, p. 7; Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 45, p. 83.
2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 44, p. 192.
3. See Mafāṭīh al-Jinān.

ment by which You will honor Islam and the Muslims and dishonor hypocrisy and its people.”

5. True revival of the prophet`s way:

Imam Hussain`s era was the period of time that Islam was in isolation. He, in a letter which he sent to Basra and meanwhile invited the heads of their tribes to help him, warned them about adding false innovations into Islam and abandoning the Prophet`s sunnah and stated,

«أَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ فَإِنَّ السُّنَّةَ قَدْ أُمِيتَتْ وَإِنَّ الْبِدْعَةَ قَدْ أُحْيِيَتْ»¹

“I invite you to Allah`s Book and His Prophet`s way. Indeed, the Prophet`s way is destroyed and (false) innovations are revived.”

In Imam of the age`s occultation period, the Prophet`s religion and his sunnah will be forgotten too and he will bring the Quran and the Prophet`s true religion back into use. According to some narrations from Imam Ali the status of the Quran and the Prophet`s religion, before and after the advent of Imam Mahdi is clearly introduced. We read in one of those narrations,

«يَعْطِفُ الْهُوَى عَلَى الْهُدَى إِذَا عَظَفُوا الْهُدَى عَلَى الْهُوَى وَيَعْطِفُ الرَّأْيَ عَلَى الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا عَظَفُوا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى الرَّأْيِ... فَيُرِيكُمْ كَيْفَ عَدُلَ السَّيِّرَةِ وَيُجِي مَيِّتَ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ»²

“(When Imam Mahdi rises,) he will change worldly desires into heavenly guidance after they had altered salvation into worldly desires; and he will change the ideas based on the Quran after they had made the Quran follow their ideas... then he (Mahdi) will show

1. Tabarī History, vol. 4, p. 265.

2. See Nahj al-Balāgha, 138th Sermon.

you how the fair method of governing is; and he will revive what have been abandoned from the Book and the Prophet`s sunnah.”

The final word:

The most important aspects of Ashūrā are in its teachings, examples, comprehensive, and perpetual messages. These Islamic teachings have always been life-giving, motivator, effective, and lasting. Although Imam Hussain`s uprising took place in a special time and place, its effects are vast, lasting; and beyond time and place. The slogan,

«كُلُّ يَوْمٍ عَاشُورَا وَكُلُّ أَرْضٍ كَرْبَلَا»

“Every day is Ashūrā and every place is Karbalā” offers a role model and program to all nations and cultures that seek the right and justice. Imam Hussain`s epic means denying humiliation and self-respect; battling with cruelty, revealing the real face of the tyrant, seeking the right; inviting people to Imams` leadership; observing justice, and equation; giving value to freedom and nobility; leading to the revival of Islamic religion and traditions, disgracing the wrong, fighting with Satanic innovations; sustaining the right and justice; enjoining to good and prohibiting the evil, reforming the society, fighting against corruption; showing the necessity of sacrificing for the sake of belief and idea, demonstrate the necessity of forming a religious government, clarifying the right of the Household of the Prophet which was taken away of them, overthrowing the dictatorship, making a positive wave in history, trying to reform the corrupt society, and so on.

Imam Hussain and Yazīd in Karbalā land fought with each other

and although seemingly Yazīd won the battle, but in fact, ultimately Imam Hussain conquered and his thought and message remained as a heritage for all the nations throughout the human history. He sacrificed his life for the sake of this holy way.

Surprisingly, Imam Hussain's doctrine and idea; and his thought and message will be seen in Imam Mahdi's rising. It means that the role model of the universal rising of Imam Mahdi is the same as the rising of Imam Hussain; and Imam Mahdi's programs and goals will come to reality at the time of his advent. The two risings have many aspects in common and in fact, they share the goals, programs, and demands. Some of these were fulfilled in Āshūrā, but all of them will come true at the time of Imam Mahdi's advent and in the light of his universal rising.

Some of these common aspects are: Seeking the Right and fighting with the Wrong, looking for justice and applying it, destroying tyrant governments; guiding and rescuing people; reforming and making positive changes, reviving transcendent religious teachings and ultimately; forming a government and political leadership for the infallible Imams.

Although Imam Hussain's rising had a special and effective role in delivering these goals and programs as everlasting universal messages and lessons, but these goals will be fulfilled completely by Imam Mahdi. At that time, the seeds planted in the event of Karbala will bear fruit and the world will be filled with justice. Moreover, the goals of all Divine prophets will be fulfilled and human beings will experience the real peace, security, and salvation.

A considerable point is that the two risings of the two Imams also share the same place in starting and ending their mission that are



Mecca and Kūfa. Imam Hussain started his rising from Mecca; after leaving Medina, he entered Mecca and announced his rising next to Ka'ba and then set out to Kūfa. Likewise, according to narrations, Imam Mahdi, after his advent in Mecca, will invite people to pay allegiance to him and then will start his reforming movements; then, after finishing the rising and establishing justice in the world, he will set the base of his government in Kūfa. As Imam Bāqir stated,

«يَخْرُجُ مِنْ مَكَّةَ هُوَ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ الثَّلَاثُ مِائَةً وَبِضْعَةَ عَشْرٍ يُبَايِعُونَهُ بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ»¹
“Imam Mahdi and three hundred of his companions will rise from Mecca and tens of people will pay allegiance to him al-Rukn and al-Maqām (which are two places in Masjid al-Harām in Mecca).”

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 225.



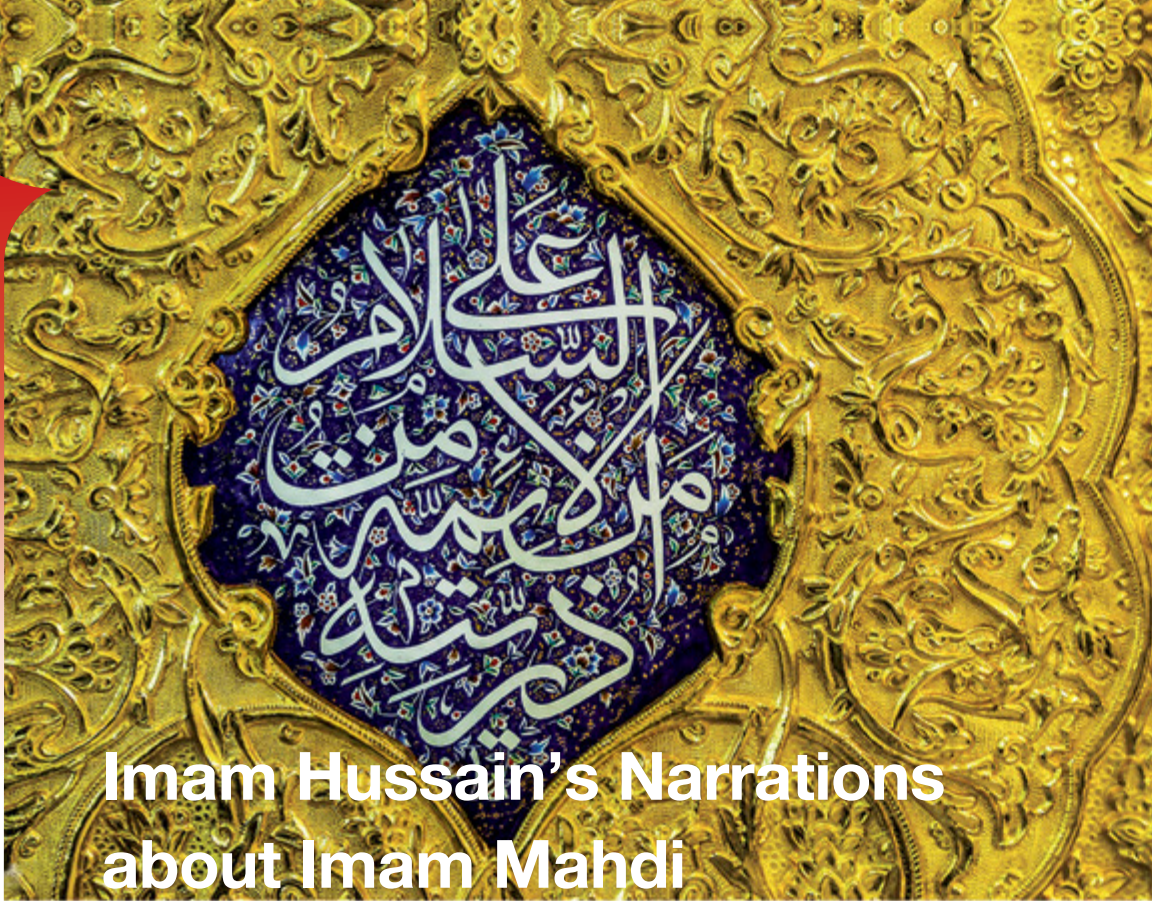
Imam Mahdi will come to complete Imam Hussain's mission and bring it to an end so that oppression will not remain in the world and justice will spread throughout the world.

Household of the Prophet) in the presence of Allah. And grant me the request of taking revenge for the unjustly shed blood of you while we are the companions of an Imam from you (Imam Mahdi) who is guided, is appeared (people can see him), and speaks about the truth."

By examining the statements of Imam Hussain about Mahdism and the matter of revelation, we realize the deep and inseparable connection between these two important and crucial uprisings.

What Imam Hussain knew about Mahdism and passed it on to his noble companions was a great goal that determines the future of the world. The Imam's martyrdom also was a prelude to achieving this universal goal.

Āshūrā paved the way for the uprising and a worldwide revolution of the Savior of mankind; since it created the fundamental idea



Imam Hussain's Narrations about Imam Mahdi

Preface

The happening of Āshūrā is an apex of the Islamic and Shiite history for which it always deserves several comprehensive studies. Among what deserves more attention is the various statements narrated from Imam Hussain about Imam Mahdi and his appearance. In his remarks, Imam Hussain highlighted certain features of Imam Mahdi, the signs of his appearance, and the grandeur of that time for both Shiites and people of other religions in the world.

We read in a part of Āshūrā Ziyārah of Imam Hussein,

«وَأَسْأَلُهُ أَنْ يَبْلِغَنِي الْمَقَامَ الْمَحْمُودَ لَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَنْ يَرزُقَنِي ظَلَبَ تَارِكُمْ مَعَ إِمَامٍ هُدَى ظَاهِرٍ نَاطِقٍ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْكُمْ».

"I ask Allah to bring me to a praiseworthy position of yours (the



among the Shia that death is better than living under the rule of oppressors and infidel powers. This idea has been always a yardstick with the Shias throughout history, and such a factor led to the formation of revolutions such as the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The continuation of this thinking, with Allah's help, will lead to Imam Mahdi's world revolution. The Shia believe that Imam Mahdi will come to complete Imam Hussain's mission and bring it to an end so that oppression will not remain in the world and justice will spread throughout the world.

Imam Hussain talked about the emergence and discussed the issue of Mahdism on several occasions. The present article seeks to classify, analyze, and examine some of these statements.

Imam Hussain's description about Imam Mahdi

In some cases, Imam Hussain, by expressing the characteristics of Imam Mahdi, persuaded people towards him and thus, prepared the ground for his emergence in the coming centuries. For instance, he in response to a man who wanted to know about Imam Mahdi described him as follows,

«مِنْ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ مِنْ ذُرْوَةِ طُودِ الْعَرَبِ وَبَحْرِ مَغِيضِهَا إِذَا وَرَدَتْ وَتَحْفِرِ أَهْلِهَا إِذَا أُتِيَتْ وَمَعْدِنِ صَفْوَتِهَا إِذَا اكْتَدَرَتْ لَا يَجِبُنْ إِذَا الْمَتَايَا هَكَعَتْ وَلَا يَحُورُ إِذَا الْمُنُونُ اِكْتَنَعَتْ وَلَا يَنْكُلُ إِذَا الْكَمَاةُ اضْطَرَعَتْ مُسَمَّرٌ مَغْلُولِبٌ ظَفِرٌ ضِرْعَامَةٌ حَصْدٌ مُخْدِشٌ ذِكْرٌ سَيْفٌ مِنْ سُيُوفِ اللَّهِ رَأْسٌ قَتْمٌ نَشْوُ رَأْسُهُ فِي بَادِيهِ السُّودِدِ وَعَارِزٌ أَعَارِزٌ مَجْدُهُ فِي أَكْرَمِ الْمُتَحِدِ فَلَا يَصْرِفَنَّكَ عَنْ بَيْعَتِهِ صَارِفٌ»¹

“He (Imam Mahdi) is from the offspring of Banī Hāshim from the

1. Al-Ghaybah, by al-Nu'mānī, p. 212.

highest of Arabs tribes in position and from an ocean towards which water flows from all sides.¹ He is like a shelter for the refugees and the source of purity when other things are dark and naughty. When death shows itself in an ambush, there will be no horror in his heart, and when death reveals its face, he will not show any weakness and inability. He will not retreat on the battlefield where all the other brave men could not stay firm. He is ambitious, will have many followers, is like a lion in the thicket in bravery who can uproot the base of the oppressors. He will be a strong and powerful support (for others) and a sword from the swords of Allah. He is a master and full of goodness and is grown up in a family of glory and honor and the root of his glory and majesty is the most original (and strong) root. So, nothing should prevent you from swearing allegiance to him.”

Then the Imam continued,

«أَوْسَعُكُمْ كَهْفًا وَأَكْثَرُكُمْ عِلْمًا وَأَوْصَلَكُمْ رَحْمًا»

“His shelter for (needy people) is the most pervasive, his knowledge is the most abundant, and his paying attention to those who are connected to him is more than others.”

In another narration, Imam Hussain describes Imam Mahdi by saying,

«فِي التَّاسِعِ مِنْ وُلْدِي سُنَّةٌ مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَسُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عِمْرَانَ وَهُوَ قَائِمُنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ»²

“In the ninth man of my generation, there is a sign of Prophet Jo-

1. This statement points to the Imam's high knowledge since in Arabic literature, ocean and sea allude to knowledge and since all waters flow towards it, it means that he will have a central position.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 133.

seph and a sign of Muses bin 'Imrān.¹ Among us, the Household of the Prophet, he is the one who will rise.”

However, Imam Hussain used to portray the importance of the holy existence of Imam Mahdi for the Shias in such a way that everyone was eager to visit and serve him.

Imam Hussain and the issue of Imam Mahdi's occultation

There is a great gap between the time of Imam Hussain to the time of the Greater Absence of Imam Mahdi and finally up to his emergence. But it is clear from the statements of Imam Hussain that from the very beginning, he felt a responsibility for the future of humanity, so that he took some great steps and coordinated all his actions with this great mission.

In his speeches, Imam Hussain prepared the minds of his people for understanding the prolongation of the absence of Imam Mahdi and spoke of a serious divine test during that period. It is narrated from him to have said,

«لَهُ غَيْبَةٌ يَرْتَدُّ فِيهَا قَوْمٌ وَيُثْبِتُ عَلَى الدِّينِ فِيهَا آخِرُونَ فَيُؤَدُّونَ وَيُقَالُ لَهُمْ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ أَمَا إِنَّ الصَّابِرِينَ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ عَلَى الْأَذَى وَالتَّكْذِيبِ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِالسَّيْفِ
بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ.»²

“For him (Imam Mahdi), it is an absence in which some groups of

1. Imam Mahdi is like Joseph since both of them were away from their family, relatives, and their lovers. Also, the Imam is like Muses since both of them, for a fraction of time, were hidden so that the adversaries could not find them.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 385.

people turn away from the religion and other groups remain steadfast in it but suffer annoyance in this way. They are told, ‘When will this promise come true if you are truthful?’ Those who endure these harassments and denials are like the ones who hold their swords in jihad next to the Messenger of Allah.”

In another statement, Imam Hussain describes the state of the society and the relations between Muslims during the absence of the Major Occultation of Imam Mahdi by stating,

«لَا يَكُونُ الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي تَنْتَظِرُونَهُ حَتَّى يَبْرَأَ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَ يَتَنَفَّلُ بَعْضُكُمْ فِي وُجُوهِ بَعْضٍ
وَ يَشْهَدُ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ بِالْكَفْرِ وَ يَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا»¹

“The matter you are waiting for (the issue of the appearance) will not take place unless a group of you show their disgust with the other group (due to confusion and chaos), and some of you spit on the faces of others, and some of you testify to the disbelief of the other group, and some of you curse the other.”

Here, the narrator told the Imam, “So, there will be no goodness at that time?” and the Imam responded,

«الْحَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ يَقُومُ قَائِمًا وَ يَدْفَعُ ذَلِكَ كُلَّهُ.»

“(On the contrary) all goodness will be gathered at that time; Our Upriser will rise and removes all those evils.”

In general, what can be deduced from the verses of the holy Quran and the correct narrations of the Prophet and his household is that at the time of the advent of Imam Mahdi who is the Promised

1. Al-Ghaybah, by al-Nu'mānī, p. 206.

One, corruption, moral deviation; and political and economic oppression will pervade all human societies and most people, even Muslims, will forget many spiritual, divine, and religious values. The general state of the world will take a gloomy and depressing face, and people will wait for a miracle to save them and get them rid of this irresistible situation.

Imam Hussain and the signs of the appearance

It is stated in a narration that Imam Hussain pointed to the fact that the friends and followers of the oppressors are among those whom Imam Mahdi will punish for their bad deeds. Here the Imam says,

«مَرَّ الْحُسَيْنُ عَ عَلَى حَلْقَةٍ مِنْ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ وَهُمْ جُلُوسٌ فِي مَسْجِدِ الرَّسُولِ ص فَقَالَ أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَا تَذْهَبُ الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ مِنِّي رَجُلًا يَفْتُلُ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفًا...»¹

“Once Imam Hussain passed by a group of Umayyads sitting in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah. He told them, ‘Be aware, I swear to Allah that the world will not come to an end until Allah raises from my progeny a man who will kill thousands of you...’”
Here we should note that Islam is the religion of mercy; and the Prophet of Allah is the symbol of affection and amiability. This is what we read in the Quran about the Prophet,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾² (از پیرانترآیه استفاده شود)

“We sent you only as a mercy to the world.”

1. Al-Ghaybah, by al-Tūsī, p. 191.

2. The Quran, 21:107.

As a result, Imam Mahdi who follows the Sunnah of the Prophet will act exactly in accordance with what the Prophet used to do and will be the representation of kindness. But we should not neglect the fact that the Imam should be severe to those who want to act against the tradition of the Prophet and in opposition to the interest of the Islamic society just as what the Prophet used to treat with the polytheists.

Conclusion

We, by deliberating Imam Hussain’s statements about Mahdism and his Emergence, find that he was aware of the status and importance of Imam Mahdi’s action against the tyrannical rule of that time. Imam Hussain has enough knowledge and certainty about this issue in the light of his infallibility and closeness to Allah. He knew that only by sacrificing his pure blood and that of his companions could preserve the religion of the holy Prophet, and deliver the banner of Islam to the pure hands of the Promised Mahdi. Āshūrā and waiting for the advent of Imam Mahdi are inextricably linked with each other. For this reason, Imam Hussain promoted the culture of Mahdism in various ways. Therefore, if we now seek to cognize the real face of the Event of Āshūrā, after gaining knowledge, we should try to prepare the ground for the appearance of Imam Mahdi by examining the words of Imam Hussain and getting acquainted with the various dimensions of his uprising in Āshūrā. Because the issue of awaiting and laying the groundwork for the rule of divine justice is one of the important achievements of Karbalā incident.

A Correlation Between Āshūrā and Mahdism

Nowadays, the red way of Āshūrā and the green path of Mahdism [believing in Imam Mahdi] are identified as the most basic “targets” by infidelity army for cultural attack and to oppose the Right army. In the enemies’ view, the Shiite’s society, which is influenced by these two essential points, has more integrity and power of motion. So, for the adversaries to collapse the harmony and unity of a society, it is essential to think about how to remove these huge targets more than anything else!

Āshūrā has a profound effect on the formation and transparency of the historical alignment between the Right and the Wrong. In

the event of Āshūrā, there is no good quality, but it is seen in the army of the Master of the Martyrs (Imam Hussain) and there is no moral vice, but it is found in the soldiers of Yazīd and ‘Umar bin Sa’d’s army.

Āshūrā is a manifestation of belief and godliness that stood in front of animosities and secret wickedness that was hidden in the hearts of some repulsive people that manifested itself in that battle. This is why getting familiar with Āshūrā gives people a real insight and criterion about knowing excellence and badness and removes one’s negligence about what he should know.

Similarly, Mahdism is the bright future which is the yardstick to evaluate every positive change and motion and to realize that everything that is not in harmony with it should be thrown away.

In the modern age, which is the age of evolution of the power of deceit and hypocrisy; and the strength of the Wrong army, some distortions have occurred in the culture of waiting for the advent of Imam Mahdi. The Wrong army tries to introduce the motion of mankind towards the future bright light of Mahdism, firstly, as a very low and gradual movement which is void of a fast and forward jumping movement and secondly, as a power dependent to mankind's capability telling us that Divine guardian is not at the center of this event! These people try to alter the meaning of Waiting to a complete earthly concept and interpret its cause in a way that would correspond to mankind's school of thought such as a liberal regime. In this new culture, man's perception of Waiting is the same as that reformational inclination which flows towards modernism and liberal democracy; and the promised and transcendent society by the prophets is this liberal society.

As regards Āshūrā, some narrow-minded people in the past used to limit it to individual cognition and understanding but today, it is considered in a different way which is vast and more comprehensive. Although the deepest aspects of Āshūrā are entangled with divinity, godliness; and the Master of the Martyr's servitude towards Allah, this epic event, from another point of view, is a reforming action that has an extreme influence over history and all mankind communities.

Moreover, Āshūrā aimed to aid all the monotheists all over the history to teach people how to act with respect to infidelity and athe-

ism. Unfortunately, there is a mutual relation between explicating the event of Āshūrā as a sole divine belief of Imam Hussain and his companions; and vision that tries to lessen Imam Hussain's battle to a combat between Umayyad and Hāshemite. In addition, these two views serve each other fully to ultimately deny every kind of responsibility and sociability from Āshūrā's teachings, and define Āshūrā as an abandoned part of history that is void of any social impact and is limited to some people's individual belief and rites. The fact is that, the event of Āshūrā is the central zone of monotheism in the whole world and forms the basic slogan of Imam Mahdi's flag bearers who say (*Yā la Thārāt al Hussain*) meaning, "O! Those who seek revenge for the blood of Hussain." The pervasive event of Āshūrā must not be limited to an event in Umayyad era and then to one's individual faith.

In the view of unfair people, since the world community moves towards secularism, the status of hermeneutic interpretation of Āshūrā – in a way that corresponds to modern universal movement – is very important. It is thought that how Āshūrā can be interpreted so that it would correlate to the world community; moreover, based on the vision of these people Āshūrā should not be in conflict with secularism and modernism and should not disturb liberal democracy and modernism from forming globalization. This is the greatest distortion related to Āshūrā that has a destructive effect on the doctrine of Mahdism.

Teenage Corner

1

Is there anyone to help Imam Mahdi?

Once upon a time, Imam Hussain, our third Imam, lived in Medina. Imam Hussain always used to invite people to good deeds and advise them to stay away from those who did misdeeds and oppressed others. He could not remain silent about injustice, could not ignore them, and remain indifferent. That was why Yazid, who was the caliph at that time and used to oppress people and do misdeeds, had a deep hostility towards Imam Hussain.

One day, the Imam, received many letters from the people of Kūfā. In those letters, they invited the Imam to go to their city and they promised the Imam to help him. Therefore, Imam Hussain and his family and some of his companions (who were seventy-two people) moved from Medina to Kūfā. But when they reached the land near Kūfā called Karbalā, they faced the enemy soldiers of Yazid and they prevented the Imam from moving forward and decided to



fight against him. Imam Hussain and his family and companions stayed there for a few days. Yazid's army cut off the water on them so it made them feel very thirsty. One night, Imam Hussain and his companions came together to discuss this situation.

"They have hostility towards me, you can go, save yourselves, and leave me alone." The Imam said to his companions.

"In any case, we stay with you." His loyal companions answered.

The next day which was the Day of Āshūrā, the war began. The Imam and his companions fought against the enemy until they were all martyred. The ruthless enemy cut off the heads of Imam Hussain and the men of his family and took the rest of his family who were mostly female, as captive.

Since that time, the Imam's lovers speak about Imam Hussain's courage, respect him, and cry for him and try to enliven his di-

vine goal. Because he was martyred without any guilt and his so-called sin was that he did not accept the unholy demands of Yazīd and did not obey bad people. Oppositely, people hate Yazīd; curse him and those who helped him since they acted against the Sunnah of the Prophet.

Now my friends, do you think that Imam Hussain won or lost the war against Yazīd?

The answer is clear! He won. Because the name of Imam Hussain and his way is alive even after one thousand and four hundred years. But we curse Yazīd and hate him and his followers. We are the enemy of the oppressors and invoke blessings for Imam Hussain and his companions. Although the Imam and his companions were all martyred outwardly, in fact, they achieved their purpose which is to manifest the real face of Islam and show the true face of the tradition of the Prophet.

The second question is that if Imam Hussain had seventy-two thousand companions instead of seventy-two, could he have outwardly defeated Yazīd's army or not?

Yes, if the Imam had more companions such as his brother "Abū al-Fazl" or "Hurr" who could defeat many people alone, he would surely defeat Yazīd and his followers. So that, Imam Hussain could become the ruler of the Islamic world. But, because that did not happen the Merciful Allah saved a descendant of Imam Hussain for this purpose. Now tell us who is he?

Excellent. He is Imam Mahdi.

The third question is why does not Imam Mahdi rise up to make the world a better place by his appearance?

There are several answers to this question. One of them is that because the companions of Imam Mahdi have not become sufficient and ready yet. So, if Imam Mahdi rises up like Imam Hussain, who was martyred due to the low number of his companions, Imam Mahdi will also be martyred; and because he is the last Imam, he must wait until his companions become enough in number. Please note the following story:

At the time of Imam Sādiq, (the Shia's six Imam), Sahl bin Hassan al-Khurāsānī came to Medina to meet the Imam.

"Why do not you rise up against the cruel government when you have about one hundred thousand Shiites who are all ready to help you?" He asked Imam Sādiq.

Strangely enough, the Imam ordered him to sit in the oven that was full of fire. The Imam did that in order to test him and to show him that his real Shias are less than that number.

The man, who was surprised by this command, apologized to the Imam and did not obey the command. At the same time Hārūn al-Makkī, one of the true companions of Imam Sādiq, entered.

"O Hārūn! Go inside the oven." The Imam said to him.

Hārūn entered the oven immediately. After a while, the Imam and the man looked inside the oven. The man saw Hārūn sitting cross-legged in the flames and miraculously the fire was not harming him.

"How many people do you know to be like Hārūn al-Makkī who are obedient to me so much?" The Imam asked the man.

"I do not know even one man like him." Sahl bin Hassan answered.

Then the Imam continued, “We will not rise when we do not have five companions like him. We, ourselves, know the right situation better.”

Dear children! An Imam never gives an order that harms others. Here, Imam Sādiq wanted to clarify the fact that if they do not rise it is because they do not have enough loyal companions; and those who claim to be their friends will leave them alone at the critical moment.

This is just like what happened in Karbalā. The people of Kūfa sent eighteen thousand letters to Imam Hussain inviting him to come to Kūfa.

They wrote if the Imam came, they would have helped him. But when Imam Hussain accepted their invitation and moved towards Kūfa, the people of Kūfa left the Imam alone due to the fear being killed since the representative of Yazīd threatened them that if they assisted the Imam, they would have faced a severe reaction.

At that time, Imam Hussain said a beautiful and meaningful sentence, “*Is there anyone to help me?*” By this sentence, the Imam expressed his dissatisfaction with the people of Kūfa who failed to assist their Imam.

Now in our present time, Imam Mahdi says the same sentence to us. When the Imam’s loyal and sincere companions get ready to help him and sacrifice themselves in the way of him, he will appear. Of course, we can help Imam Mahdi in different ways. Because the establishment of a government at the global level requires an organization. This organization should be set up at different

times and situations. One during the time of occultation, another one for the time of the Imam’s appearance, and finally an organization for establishing a world government under the supervision of the Imam. It is clear that these organizations cannot be achieved at once, rather the base of these organizations must have been created many years before the appearance of the Imam of the Age among the people who wait for him.

So, we can now prepare ourselves to help him by increasing our love for him and our knowledge about him, performing the obligations of Islam, doing good deeds, avoiding bad deeds, helping other people on this path, and praying for the appearance of Imam Mahdi.

2

The secret behind the reward for weeping over Imam Hussain

One day Sayyid Bahr al-’Ulūm walked lonely towards Samara. On his way, he was thinking about a subject that was mentioned in Islamic narrations. It was that man’s sins are forgiven by weeping over Imam Hussain. At that moment, he noticed an Arab man approached him while riding a horse, and greeted him. Then the Arab man asked him, “O sayyid! What are you thinking about? If it is a scientific subject, raise it, I might know the answer.”

Sayyid Bahr al-'Ulūm replied, "I am thinking of why Allah gives so much reward to the visitors of the holy shrine of the Master of the Martyrs [Imam Hussain] and to the weepers over him; for example, those who walk towards the shrine of Imam Hussain, are given the reward of a Hajj and an 'Umrah for every step they take. Moreover, all of their little and great sins of them are forgiven by a single drop of their tears?"¹

The Arab man answered, "Do not be surprised! I give you an example to explain it."

A king and his courtiers went hunting. The king lost his companions, got lost, fell in a severe difficulty, and became very hungry. Surprisingly, he saw a tent at a distance, went there, and entered. There was an old woman and her son in the tent. There was a goat on the corner of the tent, and they made a living by consuming its milk. When the king entered, they did not know he was a king, but they slaughtered the goat and cooked a part of it to serve their guest; because they did not have anything else.

The king slept there overnight, then on the next day, his companions found him and the king explained the event to them. Finally, the king asked them, "What should I do in response? If I want to give a reward to the old woman and her son for their service what can be appropriate?"

Someone said, "Give them one hundred sheep."

Another one who was his minister offered, "Give them one hun-

1. Of course, this reward and forgiveness are given to those who by this action try to be like the Imam and attempt to be entirely obedient to Allah for the rest of their life. So, it must not be misunderstood that one can commit sins and just by weeping for Imam Hussain simply wipe them up completely.



dred sheep and one hundred gold coins."

Another man proposed, "Give them some farms."

The king replied, "In compensation, everything is little but only if I give them all my throne; because they gave me everything they had, so I have to give them everything I own, to compensate for it." Then the Arab man asked, "Now, o Bahr al- 'Ulūm, the Master of the Martyrs gave all he had for the sake of Allah, his wealth and property; his family and household, his sons, his brothers, and also his soul. So, there is no wonder, if Allah gives the pilgrims and weepers of him so much reward.

In other words, Allah gives some degrees to the pilgrims and weepers of his beloved Imam; although Allah does not regard that reward, comparable to Imam Hussain's sacrifice."

As the Arab man ended that saying, he disappeared; and it became clear that he was Imam Mahdi or someone on behalf of him.¹

1. Al-'Abqarī al-Hissān, vol. 1, p. 119.



3

Special attention of Imam Mahdi to the mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussain

Since the Imam of the Age (Imam Mahdi) is the real mourner of Imam Hussain, there is no doubt that he pays special attention to the commemorations which are held for his great grandfather - Imam Hussain.

Sheikh Abd al-Zahra Ka'bī, one of the Shiites' great preachers, says, "One afternoon I entered the courtyard of Imam Hussain's

holy shrine. Someone who knew me was selling religious books in front of a chamber at the courtyard; he saw me and said, 'I have a small book full of beautiful poetries and I think you may like it. I do not ask you for any price if you read its poems for me.'" I took the book, and it was so useful; because the poems of bin-Arandas Hillī for which I had looked for a long time, were in the book. I sat down on a porch and started reading the poems for him, and we both shed tears. Suddenly, I saw a great man of Arabs was standing in front of me, listened to me, and shed tears. When I read these couplets of the poem,

«أَيُّقَتَلُ ظَمَانًا حُسَيْنٌ بِكَرْبَلَا
وَفِي كُلِّ عَضْوٍ فِي أَنَامِلِهِ بَحْرٌ»

He cried more, turned towards the holy shrine, repeated these couplets, and cried like a mother who lost her young boy. When the poem ended, I did not see him anymore. I exited the courtyard to find him but, I did not see him. I looked in all directions, but found no trace of him; as if he disappeared from my sight. I knew surely that he was Imam Mahdi.

Allāmah Amīnī¹ said in his book "*Al-Ghadīr*"² that it is famous that reciting the poems of Bin- Arandas in any mourning commemoration of Imam Hussain makes the Imam of the Age come there.

Below are parts of that poem,

1. Shīftegān-e Hazrat-e Mahdi (The Lovers of Imam Mahdi), vol. 3, p. 172; Molāqāt bā Imam-e Asr (Visiting the Imam of the Age), p. 315; 'Ināyāt-e Hazrat-e Mahdi be 'Ulāmā va Tollāb (Espcial attention of Imam Mahdi to the Religious Scholars), p. 397; Kalimāt al-Mukhtār, vol. 1, p. 440.

2. Al-Ghadīr, vol. 7, p. 14.

A letter to the Imam

«أَيُّقْتَلُ ظَمَانًا حُسَيْنٍ بِكَرْبَلَا
وَفِي كُلِّ عُضْوٍ فِي أَنَامِلِهِ بَحْرٌ
وَوَالِدُهُ السَّاقِي عَلِي الْحَوْضِ فِي غَدٍ
وَ فَاطِمَةُ مَاءِ الْفُرَاتِ لَهَا مَهْرٌ
فَوَاهُفْ نَفْسِي لِلْحُسَيْنِ وَ مَا جَنِي
عَلَيْهِ عَدَاةُ الظَّفِّ فِي حَرْبِهِ الشِّمْرِ»

“Should Hussain be martyred thirsty in Karbalā while the sea is at any of his fingertips¹; his father gives water to all the people at the Hereafter from the kawthar Pool; and the Furāt River is his mother’s dowry? Alas! What crimes that Shimr² has committed against Imam Hussain on the day of Karbalā!”

1. Here the poet uses a metaphor. In Arabic, hand is the symbol of charity; and water is the sign of blessing and knowledge. So, the poet says how a man whose every fingertip is like a sea of blessing, mercy, and knowledge can be killed. Moreover, the sea denotes an enormous amount of water and a man who owns it should not be thirsty, but Imam Hussain was.

2. The man who slaughtered the Imam.

O Imam Mahdi! We are in the days of Muharram and the mourning anniversary of your great grandfather, Imam Hussain who was martyred in the land of Karbalā, has begun.

We know you feel extremely sad and grieve for him. When your heart is so much hurt, how we can remain indifferent. We offer you our condolences and ask Allah to grant you a lot of patience.

You are the most important link between us and Allah and if you are sad, everyone who is connected to you is sad.

I heard that you said in narration to Imam Hussain, “O my noble grandfather! I cry for you every morning and night and I shed blood for you instead of tears.”

We ask Allah Almighty to hasten your appearance so that you can take revenge on your unjustly shed blood of your grandfather. May Allah grant me the fortune to be with you and assist you on the day you come.



أَيْنَ الظَّالِمِ بِدَمِ الْمُقْتُولِ بِكَرْبَلَاءَ؟

**Where is the one who will take revenge for
the shed blood of the martyred on the land
of Karbala?**

(Nudbah supplication.)