

PROMISED PEACE 5

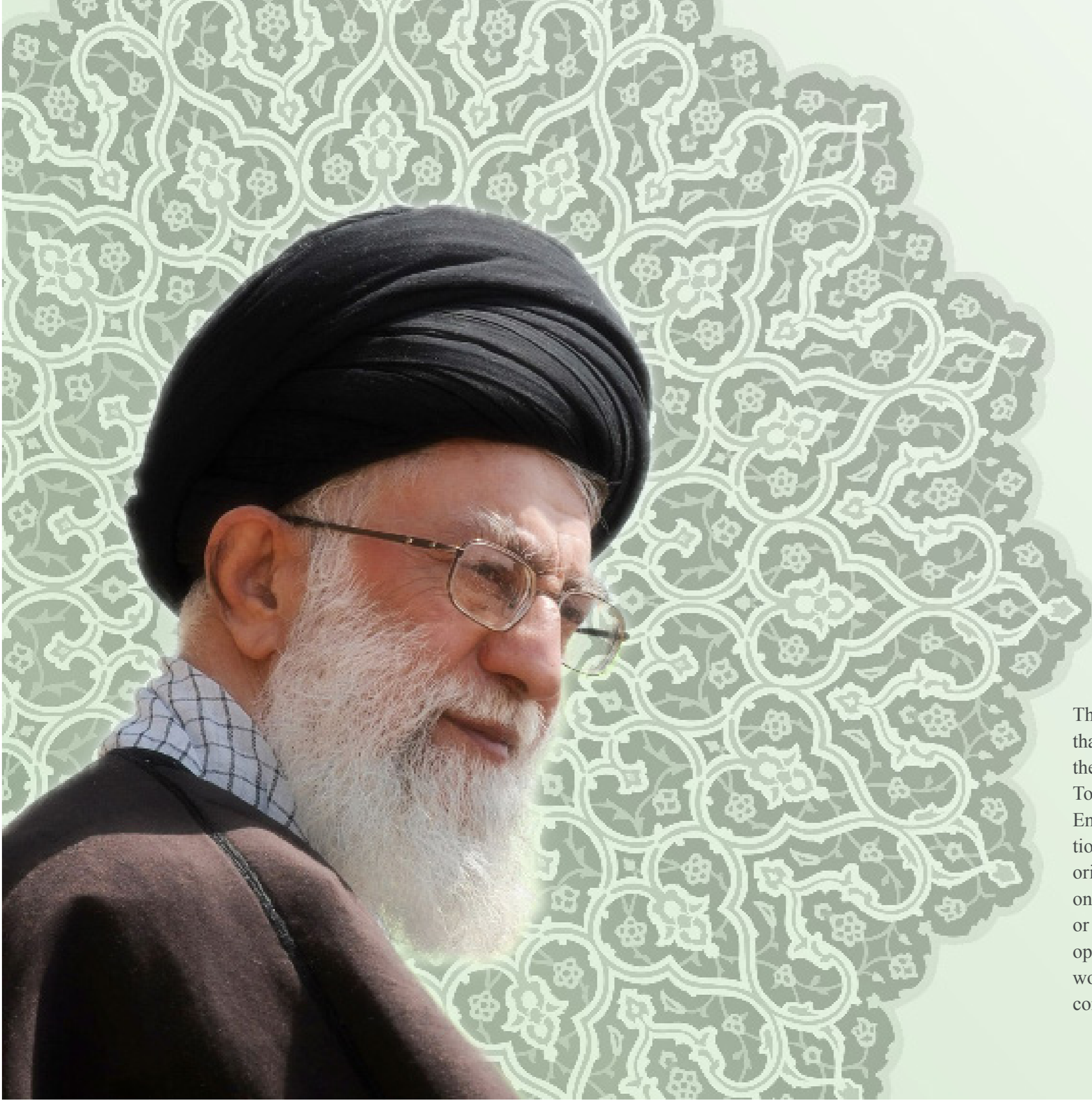
An International Magazine on the Reappearance of Imam Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam (AJ)

**Obstacles to the Appearance
of the Savior**

Pathology of Mahdism

**Necessity of knowing
Imām Mahdi**





This is a very important point that all of the contrastive ideas were attacked by the enemies.

Today we must be conscious!

Enemies are against the Islamic laws and regulations. Each idea and each recommendation originating from Islam which has positive effects on the life and destiny of Muslims individually or socially in the future, are opposed in a way by the enemies, if they cannot work on its content.

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In the Name of God

The Promised Mahdi Cultural Foundation is a society which works with the aim of spreading and deepening Mahdism culture in the world, especially among the youths and elite, as well as training the teachers and researchers in this field.

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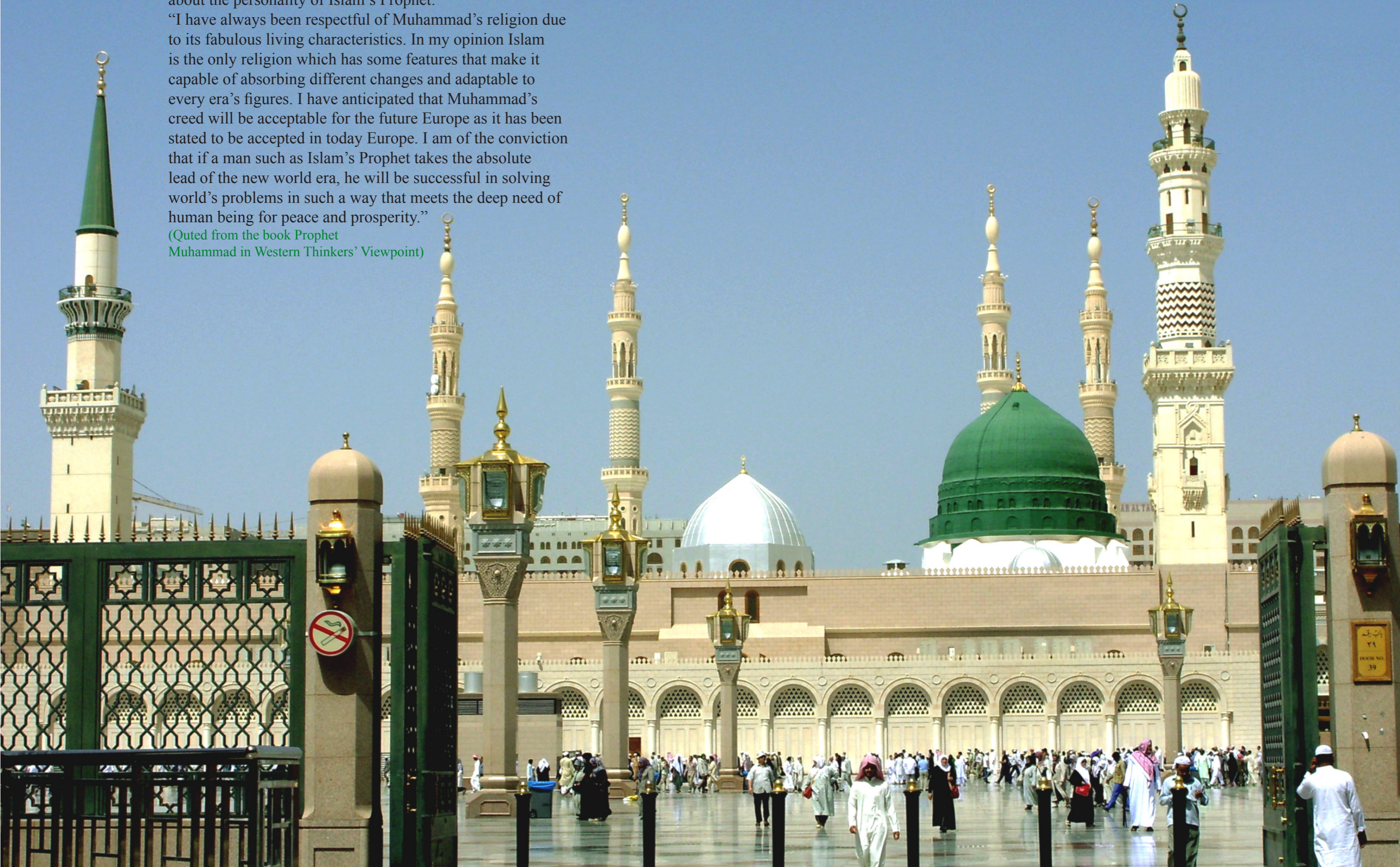
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George Bernard Shaw, the Britain's most famous writer says about the personality of Islam's Prophet:

"I have always been respectful of Muhammad's religion due to its fabulous living characteristics. In my opinion Islam is the only religion which has some features that make it capable of absorbing different changes and adaptable to every era's figures. I have anticipated that Muhammad's creed will be acceptable for the future Europe as it has been stated to be accepted in today Europe. I am of the conviction that if a man such as Islam's Prophet takes the absolute lead of the new world era, he will be successful in solving world's problems in such a way that meets the deep need of human being for peace and prosperity."

(Quoted from the book Prophet Muhammad in Western Thinkers' Viewpoint)



Obstacles in the Savor's Reappearance

This article is an attempt to make know the obstacles in the savor's reappearance. Prior to this, we need to know on what foundations do people lay their lives and how they proceed into it. Are they satisfied with the way life is going on or if it is going well? Are they willing to be more diligent to move toward a better life?

Having a short glance at social interactions between people, we come to this conclusion that people's whole lives have been bundled up in using modern and diverse gadgets produced and distributed by tycoons. Using these gadgets have grown to be so common that people cannot live without them for a day or a Week. For instance; if people do not use either of their mobile or internet communications, if they do not exchange commodities through net for one day, that day is considered to be an inauspicious one.

Secondly, people are engaged in holding fascinating parties and celebrations. They are busy with marriage anniversaries, birthday parties, or graduation and promotion parties. They are to revel in, using any available means from music to drugs, immorality and lavish extravagance at the expense of wasting all their money overnight.

Thirdly, nowadays people interfere and express their ideas about political affairs and follow live news, either political or others' private lives from all over the world, and receive information through the internet. Exchanging such news is

too extent that considered being as a value and goal. Yet, people are not aware that such a flux of information and news has hampered them to mull about more important aspects of life. The enormity of this information imposed on people is turning them into salves in the hands of those who broadcast such information purposefully to reach their own personal goals and profits.

These aforementioned factors carry people away from their own real needs pushing them toward false needs.

While there are more important needs, goals and values that remained unknown to people of the present time. It is their responsibility to follow those values so as to save themselves from lacking in identity.

Man should be aware of the treasures inside him. These treasures are fitra¹, wisdom, soul, spirituality and genuine and pure intentions.

Should he preserve these treasures from not being contaminated by sin, he can reach human values which bring prosperity and goodness for him which plays an important role in his humane perfection. Those who know themselves and recognize their own badness and goodness might reach such treasures. In this regard, the holy Qur'an says: "and [by] the soul and He who proportioned it and inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness, He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who instills it [with corruption]." (91:7-10) These verses say that

when one turns to and mulls about his heart, he will recognize his dignity and grandeur and see that villainy and badness is incompatible with him. He will feel that telling lies, sedition and adultery is incompatible with him. This is through recognition that man will heed for and perceive himself and through a proper recognition, he needs nobody to move him away from unappealing works, since he would recognize what is good to do and what is not. He will also be able to recognize the obstacles in his growth to the perfection. This is what known as self- (awareness). Why one is ought to know himself? Where we would get to, knowing and being aware of ourselves? What would self-awareness introduce to us? Firstly, if we know ourselves, we would know the main secret of the world, God. Secondly, if we know ourselves, we would know what to do and how to behave in our lives and in this world, i.e. morality and good deeds. Thus; this is through self-knowledge that we can worship God, approach to Him and take advantages of human dignity and motives. It is through self-knowledge and worship that one can know God, since knowing God leads man to real relief and makes him enjoy the (material) world and save for his hereafter. Self-knowledge also makes us aware of a real leader looking for him everywhere to know who he is? How the leader would take his hand leading him to the main source which is goal of his creation. Thus; through

self-knowledge, one would get to know his true leader or his true savor and then the God. These three principles follow each other and one play the role of a complementary for the next.

We come to this conclusion that, nowadays man should get to know himself and through self-knowledge (awareness) he would recognize his true needs. Through recognition of his true needs, he would discover false and futile needs within himself and save himself from falling down to the darkness and ignorance, then he will ascend to the pinnacle of spirituality and sublime position while turning away from lacking in identity, justice and arrogance. Unfortunately, by lack of self-knowledge and frequently lack of knowing God, one can stand up against divine commands and commit sins which will bring bad consequences, without feeling any regret or thinking of repentance.

It is through mulling about true and false values that you can recognize the obstacles in the reappearance of our promised Imam and then manage to remove them.

Notes:

1. 12th living Imam of the Muslim
2. Fitra translated as "primordial human nature and as "instinct" or "common sense". Wikipedia Translator: Rezvan Sadoughi
Edition: Hannaneh Divan Beigi

Mahdism



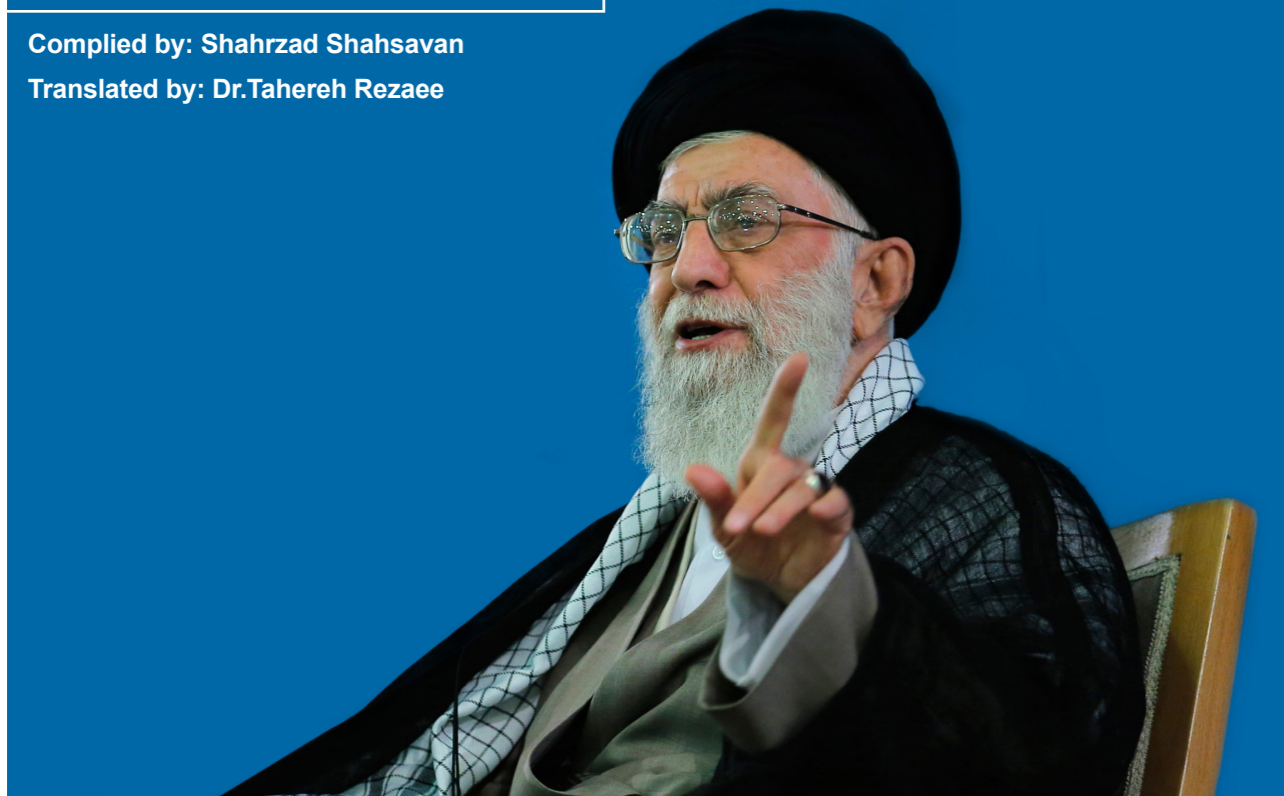
Knowing the Enemy

from the Viewpoint of Ayyatollah Khameneie

the Supreme Leader

Complied by: Shahrzad Shahsavan

Translated by: Dr.Tahereh Rezaee



The supreme leader of the Islamic Revolution points to the importance of knowing the enemy in the advent of the living Imam, saying:

Any constructive idea has been attacked by the enemy. This is an important issue. We must be aware of it today! The enemy targets Islamic rules and decree. Any idea, any advice of the holy law leading to the Muslim's prosperity, has been targeted by the enemy trying to destroy it, if not possible, to manipulate the content.

One might ask, what has the enemy done? How can the enemy do something with the Islamic beliefs which could make it out of peoples reach? Well, this is going to take a long time, maybe constant years. Sometimes the enemy tries for ten years to fade or blind a shining point or to create a dark point! The enemy splurges on his goal. One comes and puts a lot of effort but he gets nowhere; then the next does the same. This is something common which has been done to the Islamic beliefs. They have

been working on the concepts of Tawhid (Unity of God), Imamate and Islamic morality and ethics- of patience, trust in God and contentedness.

All of the issues stated above are striking ones. Should we Muslims heed for their truth, they will work as a motor pushing forward the Islamic society. On the other hand, when the enemy works on them, by manipulating the concepts and making up a different meaning, the same moving motor will turn to be a sleeping drug. (tranquilizer)

We are talking about sage enemies who target such beliefs. One of the issues that has disturbed colonizers (imperialists) is the belief in Mahdism.¹

I have observed a document in which the grand colonizers had advised their commanders to do something to nullify people's beliefs in Mahdism gradually. Those days, Britain and France were colonizing some African zones- there's no difference in where they colonize- the foreign colonizers believe that as long as the people believe in Mahdaviat, we can not control their countries as we want.

See how belief is important in Mahdaviat. Having faith in Mahdism has some characteristics for every nation, which is like the flow of blood and the existence of the soul in the body. Among these characteristics is hope. Sometimes strong nations make weak nations lose their hope. When they lose their hope, they would take no actions since they think there is no use and they can do nothing. "Who should we fight with? What can we do? Why should we try? We can't do anything".

This is the spirit of frustration and disappointment, exactly what colonizers (imperialism)

Nowadays global arrogance tends to make Muslim nations, especially the Iran nation, afflicted with frustration, saying: it is too late and there is no use to do something! They want to force it into peoples' minds



want. Nowadays global arrogance tends to make Muslim nations, especially the Iran nation, afflicted with frustration, saying: it is too late and there is no use to do something! They want to force it into peoples' minds. We, who know the enemies' intoxicated news and propagandas, are eyewitnesses of their actions to frustrate people. They frustrate people towards culture and economy. They frustrate true believers towards spreading their religion. They frustrate democrats and those who are interested in political and cultural issues towards acting in this regards. They show the future dark and dim for those who are looking forward to future prospects. Why do they do so? To take hope and efforts from this mass of humanity, preventing them from working hopefully, turning them into the dead or something alike, this way they can do what they want. They can do nothing with a live nation. Anyone can penetrate any thought to a numbed, unconscious body left in a corner; they can do what they want with it, however; they can not do anything they want with lively, fresh, sharp and active ones. If a nation is not active and

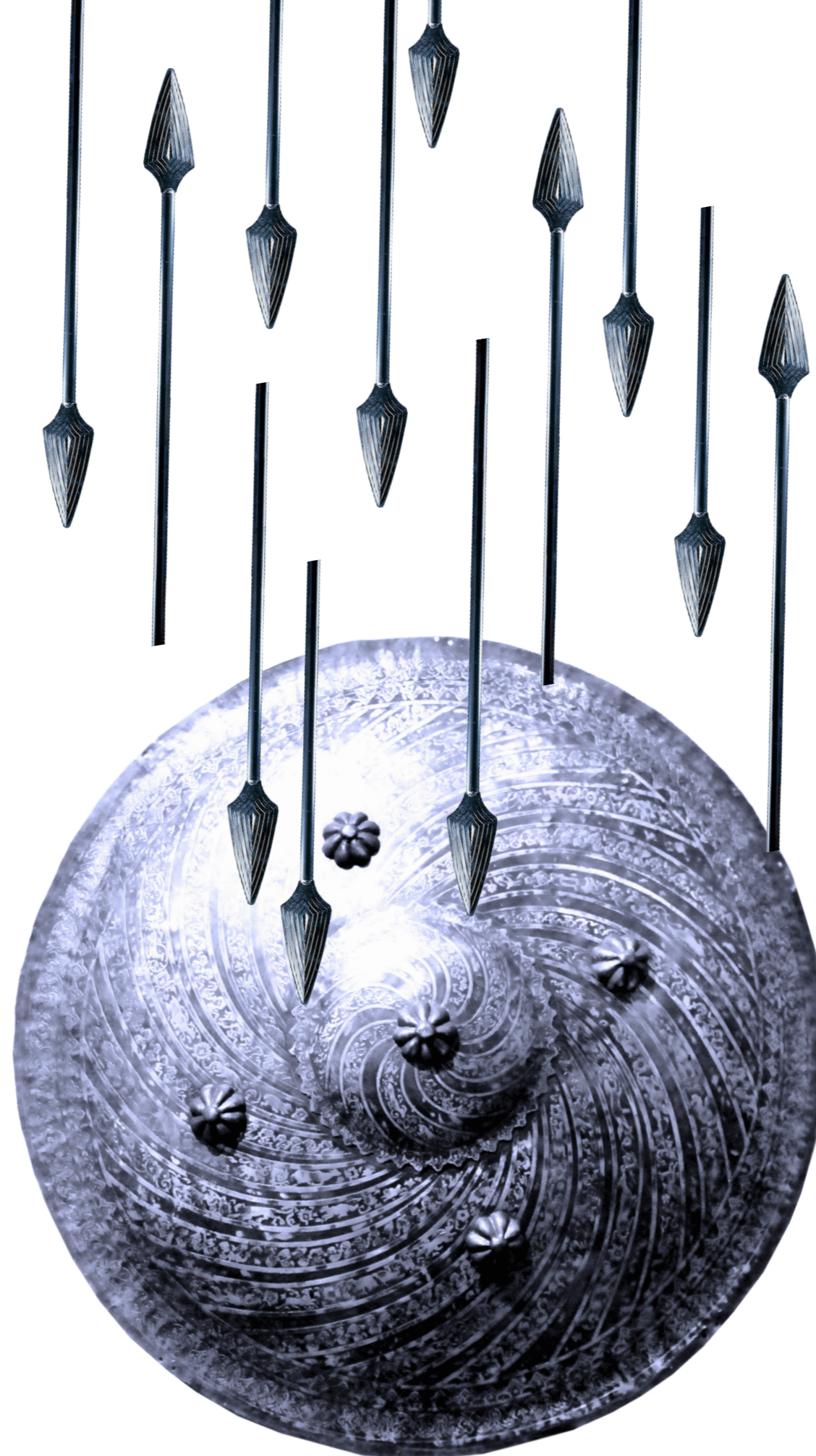
Any breath one takes or any vocal cord that moves to make people frustrated would be at enemy's disposal, either he knows it or not.

Any pen writing to disappoint people belongs to the enemy; either the writer knows it or not the enemy is making use of him.

doesn't see a value and future for itself, the enemies will come and plan for its future, give advice, make its decisions and act for it. They can do it without any obstacles. This is the result of inactivity which results from frustration and hopelessness. Notice and Know this!

Any breath one takes or any vocal cord that moves to make people frustrated would be at enemy's disposal, either he knows it or not. Any pen writing to disappoint people belongs to the enemy; either the writer knows it or not the enemy is making use of him.

Of course when they did not succeed in ruining this belief, they would try to ruin the concept in peoples' minds. How can they ruin this belief? They will say that the living Imam will come



and make everything proper! This will ruin ones' belief. This is turning a moving motor to a hamper, a strengthening medicine to a sleeping drug.

You should smooth the way and prepare the field for that Excellency so that he would appear to take action on that prepared field. One can not start from the bottom! A prepared and qualified society will be able to host the holy Promised Mahdi, unless he will be the same as the Imams and Prophets throughout the history. What is the reason that Ulul'azm Anbiya' (arch-Prophets) came but couldn't purify the world from impiety? Why? Because the fields were not ready, why couldn't the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib (AS), with his divine power, knowledge from the divine resources, the volition and brightness in his character and with the last Prophets' recommendations, uproot impiety?

We wish that all believers will be under the auspices of that Excellency

Obstacles to the Appearance of the Savior

Author: Zohreh Khosravi
Translator: Sarah Nosrati

The subjects of the former issues of this magazine were on savior and Savior Orientation. There, at first we addressed the necessity of the existence of a savior and then discussed the importance of gaining knowledge about this matter. In this issue, we intend to elaborate on the obstacles to the appearance of the savior.

One of the biggest obstacles to the appearance of the savior is not having a deep knowledge and perception of the religion.

They introduce religion as showing a true belief in consistent with the reality and behavior according to the inner nature of human beings. They state that by doing so, it will guarantee the truth and validity of human beings. This, being a guiding way to achieve perfection, will also lead to an eternal happiness and more closeness to God. God, the Almighty says: “o ye who believe! Do your duty to Allah, seek the tools to find the way to move toward God, and strive in his way: that ye may prosper”.¹ In this regard, Imam Sadiq (AS) says: “there isn’t goodness in the person (among our companions) who doesn’t ponder on the matters attentively. Religion, guides the human being to stability of character, perseverance in hardship and to worthiness.

Once the human beings don’t gain knowledge about religion, the state of Ignorance (Jahalah) will take its place. *Jahalah* (Ignorance) is derived from the word “Jahl” meaning the absence of reason ruling over the human forces; and this equals ignorance and lack of knowledge. This word is in contrasts with knowledge and reason. Whilst religion engenders knowledge and thinking in human beings and puts their wisdom in the right direction and finally stabilizes their personality, ignorance acts on it’s contrary; it takes human beings away from thinking and is a barrier to their growth. If the human beings don’t gain knowledge about religion, they would not



know the Imam as well. Since knowing the Imam is a guiding movement for understanding the truth of God’s existence and accepting God’s rule and leadership over the entire world; and that this rule is permanent. If the man doesn’t accept this matter and doesn’t enhance his awareness and responsibility by surrendering to it, then, a kind of ignorance and *Kufr* (disbelief) will be developed in him. As regards to this matter, God says in the holy Qur’an that “of those who reject faith the patrons are the evil ones: which

lead them from the light into the depths of darkness. They will be companions of the fire, to dwell therein (forever).”²

Throughout history, the human beings have lived in ignorance; and this has always been the big obstacle to prophecy and preachings of the Divine Prophets. Since the Prophets have presented religion for the guidance of mankind. One of the historical examples is the period of the Bi’sat (appointment) of the Prophet. According to the holy Qur’an, that period is known as the ignorance period (time of ignorance).

Why has the holy Qur’an used this term? Because they remained in ignorance of God, His Prophet, and the religion’s laws (Sharia); and they took pride in their fathers and lineage. By benefiting from the existence of this quality among the people of that time, the Prophet’s (SAW) enemies took advantage of this opportunity and increased their animosity towards him, creating a big barrier to his mission. This was whilst they were well aware that the existence of the Prophet would bring great blessings for them and would save them from their social disorders. Currently, the people around the world are living in ignorance, too, which is known as the second Ignorance (Jahiliyyah).

The second Ignorance (Jahiliyyah) has the very characteristics of the first one at the time of the Prophet. To illustrate the issue we will compare these two periods:

Characteristics of the first ignorance (Jahiliyyah) period are:

1- Truth-escaping and anti-truth which causes rebelling against the truth, tenacity and obstinacy in accepting God’s words. The civilized people of the recent century, by adopting the motto of humanism have introduced human beings as the pivot of the universe and have centered on human agency; by relying on the authenticity of man’s wisdom, they have regarded it as the basis of reforming their society. They believe in the total severance of the relation between the earth and the sky, and consider humans not in need of the Divine Guidance for his social

life.

2- By obeying the decrees of other than God which were out of desires, kinship and prejudices lead to injustice. In this regard, Imam Baqir says: “decrees are of two types: God’s decree and the ignorance (Jahiliyyah) decree. So the one who fails to recognize God’s decree, they have judged out of ignorance”. In today’s modern society, we observe that people are judging out of their desire and they refuse to obey God’s decree.

3- Drowning in sin and ruin

The natural result of truth-escaping and persistence in command of the Non-God would be the acceptance of the Satan’s words in all areas, and consequently it would lead to sin and depravity. People who are opposing and standing against the governance of truth and refuse to obey God’s commands, their individual and social life will take on the color of Satan. This is the fate of all societies which don’t surrender to the governance of God, whether it’s the ignorant (Jahiliyyah) society at the time of the Prophet or the so called modern society of the current age. Then we will see moral corruption, oppression, injustice and disrespect of others’ rights in all societies due to these three characteristics. With these statements, we will notice that the appearance of the savior will happen when there is no ignorance among the human beings, and they would achieve the true knowledge about God and His proof that is the Imam. We hope that day would come.

Footnotes:

1. Surah Al-Mā’idah, verse: 35
2. The Surah al-Baqara verse 257

Sources:

The modern Jahiliyyah by Shafi’ei Sarvestani _
The life of the Prophet (Sirah) _ by Rasoul Jafarian _
Tafsir al-Mizan by Allameh Tabatabai

Pathology of Mahdism

By: Mohammad SaberJafary
Translated by: Amen Salehe

There are always harmful things happening to every culture and school that obtrude its development. Also Religious culture is sometimes infected with viruses alike which slow down its movement to perfection. The 'Religious pathology' is to find and confront these harms and viruses.

It's appropriate to discuss what has damaged Mahdism's pure culture in final chapter, to become more familiar and to think about the ways to neutralize and counteract them.

What damages Mahdism culture can be anything which, if neglected, can cause weakness in public opinions about imam's existence or aspects of his cognition, esp. among the youth. We will discuss the most important of these inconveniences and misconceptions here:

Misconceptions:

One of the Major inconveniences in the culture of Mahdism is misinterpreting and misunderstanding issues of this Islamic culture. Incorrect and incomplete interpretation and analysis of hadith leads into a false understanding, some of which are stated below:

1- Misreading the concept of 'prospect' or expectation has led some to believe that whereof reforming the world from the corruptions will be in Imam Mahdi's (AJ) hand, we have no roles in wiping away the corruptions and ruins from the face of the world. It may even be said that we should promote evil and ugliness in our society to accelerate Imam Mahdi's (AJ) reappearance. These false beliefs is against Qur'an and Ahl-ul Bayt 's viewpoint which accounts the enjoiment of good and forbidding wrong as the biggest duty of each Muslim .

Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran has criticized this point of view: "If we had enough strength and power, we had to remove all the injustice from the world; it's our religious duty. But we cannot! The fact is that Imam Mahdi (AJ) will fill the world with justice, but it doesn't mean that we don't have responsibilities and duties anymore... Shall we, against the paradigms of holy Qur'an, desist from the

What damages Mahdism culture can be anything which, if neglected, can cause weakness in public opinions about imam's existence or aspects of his cognition, esp. among the youth.



Contrary to the impression of some people who think Imam Mahdi (AJ) will Inaugurate a large pool of blood and will execute many people with a sword of justice, he is like Prophet Mohammad; an embodiment of compassion and mercy of the Lord. First,

enjoiment of good and forbidding wrong? shall one stop enjoining good and forbidding wrong and grow sins on earth for Imam Mahdi to come?!"

2- Some people misinterpret some hadith and believe that every uprising before the reappearance of Imam Mahdi's (AJ) is fey and guilty and as a result, they have taken a wrong stance against the Islamic revolution of Iran, which, in essence, was an uprising against Arrogance and evil and pro the establishment of God's commandments.

The answer is that the implementation of Islamic law as well as bringing about the jihad against the enemies and widespread fight against the corruption, isn't possible without establishing an Islamic state. Therefore, efforts to establish an Islamic system are not to be blamed. By forbidding participation in some uprisings in some hadith, they meant to forbid wars and battles with no Divine incentive or Theones that happens regardless of the circumstances and contexts or even uprisings in the name of Imam Mahdi, not to blame or forbid any revolution willing to reform a society for a better one.

3. One of the misconceptions in Mahdism culture is showing a violent character of Imam Mahdi (AJ). Contrary to the impression of some people who think Imam Mahdi (AJ) will Inaugurate a large pool of blood and will execute many people with a sword of justice, he is like Prophet Mohammad; an embodiment of compassion and mercy of the Lord. First, he invites everyone to Qur'an and Islam with expressing clear and obvious reasons and most people respond positively to his invitation and join him. Thus, Imam Mahdi (AJ) will hit militarily only with ardent opponents who knowingly refuse to accept the right and true and they just understand the way of sword and blood.

Footneots:

1- Refer to "the concept of prospect". (where exactly did you talk about this issue? Give exact address)

Necessity of knowing Imām Mahdi

We need to know Imām Mahdi for a number of reasons:

Written by: Seyyed Alī Tabataba'ī
T: SarehTaramirad

A) Prevent misguidedness and astray

Necessity of knowing Imām Mahdi is felt when humans fall into corruption and astray due to distancing from their Imām – a dangerous pitfall from which one can only keep himself safe by following an Imām. Imām Kāzīm (PBH) says, “Imām is God’s Hujjah (Witness) on His servants. Whoever detaches from Imām leads astray, and whoever attaches to him finds safety and deliverance”.

Abū Ja’far Omarī, the First Deputy of Imām Mahdi, writes in his letter to Abū Alī Muhammad bin Humām, “O Allah! Make Yourself known to me: If you do not make Yourself known to me I will not know Your Messenger. O Allah! Make Your Messenger known to me: If you do not make Your Messenger known to me I will not know Your Witness. O Allah! Make Your Witness known to me: If you do not make Your Witness known to me I will fail in my Faith (Dīn).”

B) Prevent Acts from Being Rejected

Acceptance and approval of one’s acts before God can only be hoped when Imām approves them. Imām Bāqir (PBH) said to Zurārah, “Islam is built upon five pillars: ‘Prayer (Salāt), Alm (Zakāt), Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj), Fasting (Sawm), and Imām’s Guardianship (Wilāyah)”. Zurārah said, “Which one is the most important?” Imām Bāqir replied, “Imām’s Guardianship – because it is the key and the guide to other four. If a man spends his nights and days in

prayer and fasting, spends all his wealth for the poor, and travels to Mecca on pilgrimage every year while he does not know his Imām to follow his lead and put himself under his guidance, then he will not be rewarded by Allah for any of his acts and he will not be a man of faith”.

C) Attaining to Spiritual Life

Prophet Muhammad (PBH) says, “O people, anyone of you who wants to be similar to me in his life and death, he must accept Ali’s Guardianship and follow the Imāms after Ali”.

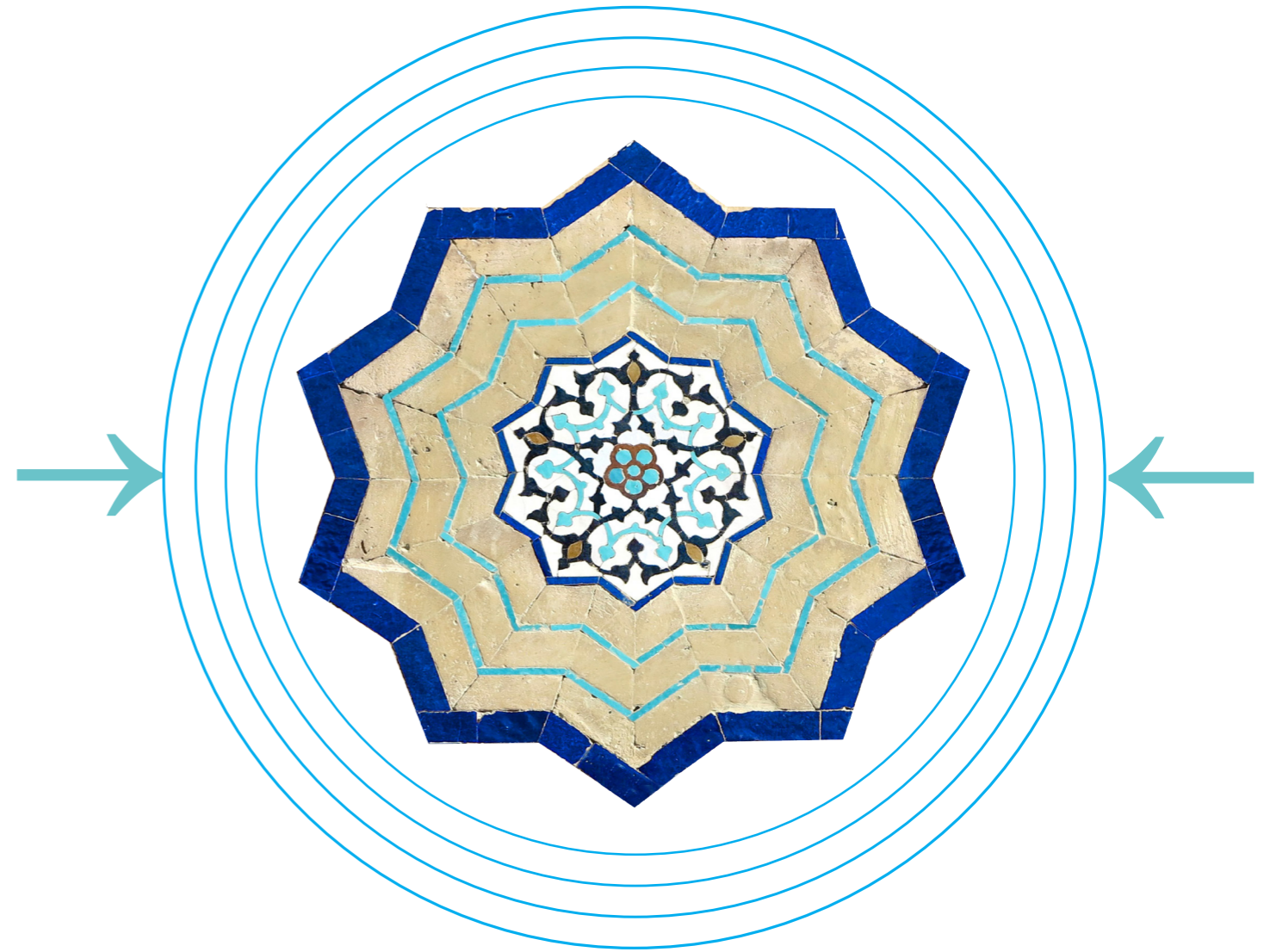
D) Avoiding Death in Ignorance

In a saying which is reported by both Shi’a and Sunni hadīth reporters, Prophet Muhammad (PBH) states that one who does not know his Imām of Time, will die in death of ignorance.

Imām Bāqir (AS) says, “One who dies and he does not have an Imām, his death is death in ignorance. No one is excused from this and everyone must know their Imām”.

Prophet Muhammad says, “Anyone who denies my son Qā’im during his Occultation and he dies while still denying, his death is indeed a death in ignorance”. A “death in ignorance” probably implies that the person dies like one who lived in the pre-Islam era, i.e. in idolatry and paganism.

Awaiting the Rise of Imām Mahdi is so strongly emphasized in Islam that the Prophet



refers to it as the most valuable act of his Ummah (the community of all Muslims of all times), and Imām Sadiq (PBH) states that all acts of followers of the faith will be accepted under the condition that they are awaiting Imām Mahdi’s rule (i.e. awaiting his rise). Somewhere else, he says, “Await the Rise day and night”. Rise of Imām Mahdi has definitely been a matter presented to Muslims since the early Islam era and has caused many important historical events since the second half of the first Hijri century.

Mahdism is an important philosophy in Islam and particularly in the Shi’a belief. It is the belief in the rise of a savior. The result is not bound to the scope of one community, one nation, one region or one ethnic group’s life, but rather it spans through lives

of all humans. Mahdism does not mean that a savior will come only to save Shi'a people, Iranians, Asians, or Muslims all over the world. It means that the savior will transform lives of all humans all over the world towards true improvement and happiness. The Holy Qur'an says:

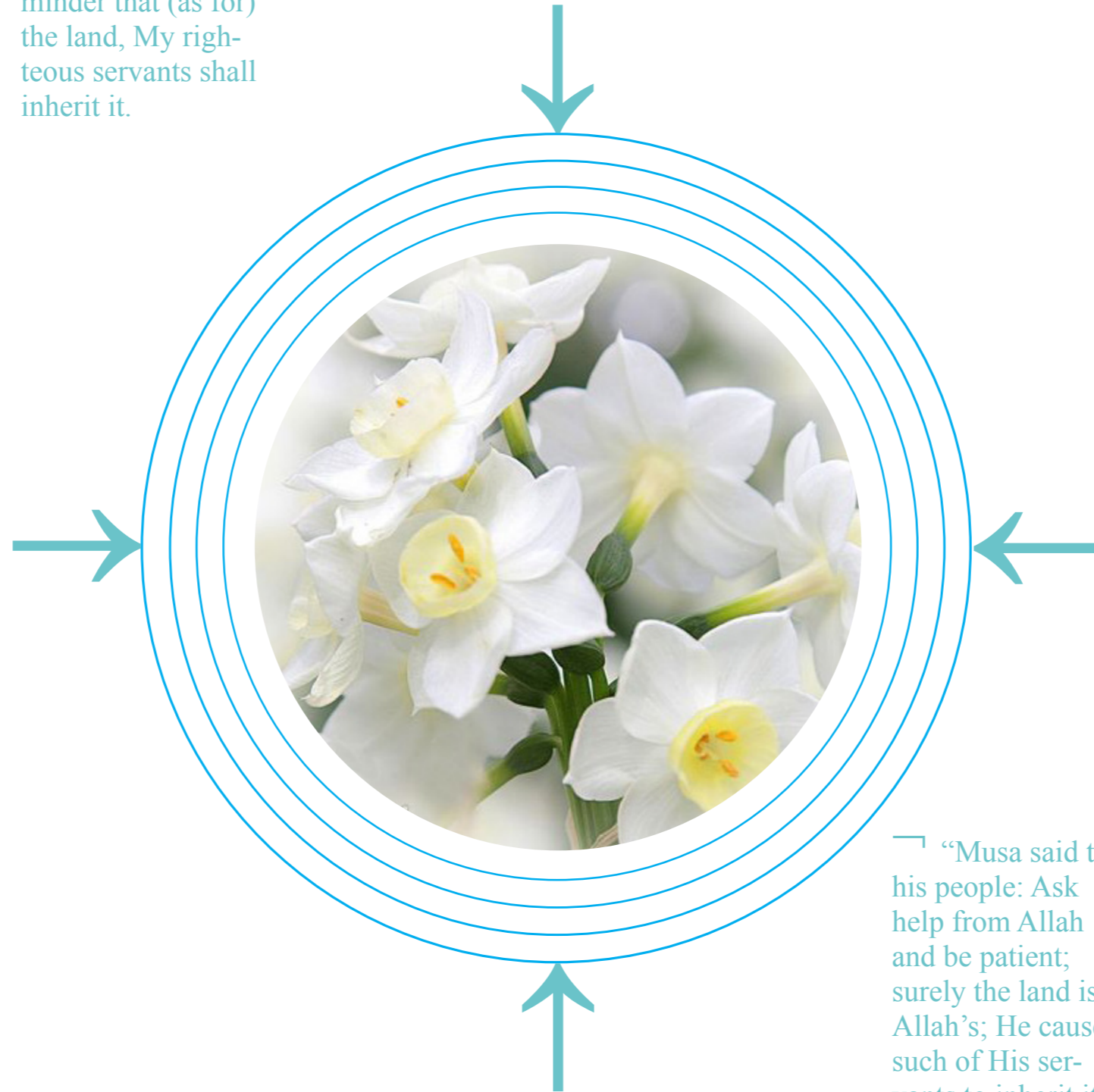
And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that (as for) the land, My righteous servants shall inherit it. (Al-'Anbiyā': 105)

In other words, Allah is saying that the true inheritors of the land will be righteous and worthy servants of God and that the earth will not forever remain in the hands of lovers of lust and outrage, passionate followers of ambition and fame, and slaves of whims of the soul. This is indeed predicting a future full of happiness for all humans, a happiness which includes victory of intellect ('Aql) over ignorance, Oneness (Tawhīd) over paganism and idolatry, faith over uncertainty, and happiness over misery. The ideas of the final victory of right, peace and justice over wrong, war and oppression, global dissemination of Islamic faith, full realization of human values in every aspect of life, building the ideal society and the utopia, and all this done by a sacred and respectful personality (referred to as "Mahdi" in numerous oft-reported Islamic hadīths), are all ideas which do exist among beliefs of almost all sects of Islam – albeit sometimes with variations and deference's in the details. The core idea is originally based on the Qur'an: It is the Holy Qur'an which solemnly promises the final victory of Islamic faith.

Definite victory of righteous people: "He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse." (Al-Tawbah: 33; Al-Saf: 9)

Fall of oppressors forever: Al-'Anbiyā': 105
Bright and happy future for the humanity: "And We desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the Imāms, and to make them the heirs, And to grant them power in the land, and to make Firon and Haman and

And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that (as for) the land, My righteous servants shall inherit it.



"Musa said to his people: Ask help from Allah and be patient; surely the land is Allah's; He causes such of His servants to inherit it as He pleases, and the end is for those who guard

their hosts see from them what they feared. (Al-Qasas: 5, 6)

"Musa said to his people: Ask help from Allah and be patient; surely the land is Allah's; He causes such of His servants to inherit it as He pleases, and the end is for those who guard (against evil)." (Al-'A'rāf: 128)

In a hadīth reported by both Shi'a and Sunni reporters, we are told that if there is only one day left of the earth's life, God will extend that day to the length that Mahdi will rise in it and make the world full of justice. Other hadīths further tell that Mahdi not only revives Islam, but he also restores all other religions to their true, original state. Awaiting the Rise, thus, is a familiar idea related to one of the greatest transformations of human life. A transformation for those people who, in the raging sea of life, most fervently hope for the Ark of Deliverance and his only true navigator to come and guide them to the land of happiness – A land full of peace, delight, equality, brotherhood, safeness, security, prosperity and comfort. A brief survey of sacred books of different world religions will reveal to us the fact that the belief in a savior who will rise at the end of time and make the world full of justice is universal. All religions predict that a sacred person will come and establish full justice, full peace, full prosperity, full health and full security for all humans. This is nothing else than the idea of evolvment, for both history and humans, which means that human life will finally reach a full and perfect level. One aspect of this perfection is realization of true friendship between humans and natural environment: The earth will reveal all its hidings and treasures and the sky will send down all its bounty – and this is in turn evolvment of history.

Source:

Zohur-e Hazrat-e Mahdī as Dīdgāh-e Eslām va Mazāheb va Melal-e Jahān ('Rise of Imām Mahdi in the perspective of Islam and world religions and nations) / Seyyed Asadollāh Hāshemī Shahīdī.

Hollywood and the End-time

Authored by: Sayyed Ali Tabataba'i

All the divine and non-divine religions believe in the End-time and the fact that there will come a day when all-Evil stands in front of all-virtue. They are waiting for a Savior who is the symbol of goodness and will save the world from oppression and evil in the end of time. Buddhists and Hindus are waiting for (Gautama) or the fifth Buddha. Zoroastrians are waiting for Sossiant... And the Christians, also expect the Second Coming of Christ from the Jerusalem. The Jews say that the real "Messiah" has not come yet.



like the Jesus Christ _who is (wrongly) believed by the Christians to be crucified and died about two thousand years ago, who will resurrect. Our savior has been alive for over a thousand years; he is not seen by the people but he is alive objectively. Thus, he has a special manifestation in the life of the Muslims. Nowadays, all people get help from him; and in expecting his coming, they try to do good deeds and prepare the grounds for his majesty's emergence. Whilst in other religions, waiting for the savior has no manifestation in their follower's ordinary life.

After the Islamic revolution's victory, the effect of the objective manifestation of the culture of waiting became evident for the West and it made them frightened of our savior. Manifestations of his presence were more evident in the revolution's victory and also during the imposed war. West realized that something other than the technological facilities and military equipment, which in addition to mobilizing the people and integrating their belief, bestows on them the power to compete for being martyred and killed in the way of God at battle fields; and all of this is by relying on a strong faith in God, that while they lack the necessary facilities, they behave so. It was because of this astonishment that in 1984 (1362 Solar Hijri year) the West held a conference at the city of Tell Aviv in Israel to address the effect of the belief in Mahdism on the Muslims, and on Iran's Shia in particular. At that conference it was concluded that the political identity of the Shia and the factor for its success was the belief in Mahdi (May Allah Hasten His Return). They stated that: these people uprising in the name of Imam Hussein (AS) and preserve their uprising in the name of Imam Mahdi (AJ).

7 July 2014...Yoshihiro Francis Fukuyama stated that: "Shia is a bird that flies beyond the reach of our arrows; a bird that has two wings: a red wing and a green one... The green wing is the look toward the future and hope in the future, and the red wing is Ashura and martyrdom

↳ **he is not seen by the people but he is alive objectively. Thus, he has a special manifestation in the life of the Muslims.**

seeking. This bird is wearing a shield which is impenetrable by the politicians. The west agents, by recognizing the importance of this matter, have carried out many researches in this regard. In fighting this thought, they have not hesitated any attempt. One of the areas where the west has invested in is the sector of cinema.

Hollywood, which had believed in the impact of image on culture-making and changing the intellectual and ideological principles of the societies, quickly began to make and produce films addressing the issue of the End-Time and emergence of the savior. For this reason, "Orson Welles", the famous Jewish Hollywood director whose film "Citizen Canne" was voted the greatest film of the world, directed a movie named as "Nostradamus predictions", in which he introduces the savior as the one whose name is the same as the last Prophet and he is Muslim. But he kills lots of people and has a barbaric behavior toward the people; so that almost everyone would hate him. He is dressed in Arab-like clothes with a turban on his head. The whole message of the film is that the Muslim's savior won't be a popular person; and there are six hundred millions of people in the Middle East who have a giant wealth of gas, oil, and natural resources at their disposal and they are dangerous for the global peace. Welles's film won the Oscar prize.

Stay with us in next issues
T: Nosrate
E: Saharkhiz
E.2: Divan Beigi

We, the Muslims, Shia or even Sunni expect the advent of Mahdi, the owner of the time, but there is a difference between Islam and other religions. Their savior will come down from heaven and at the very time of emergence, he appears among the people. But our savior is living among the people at the present moment and he accompanies and helps them with their troubles and difficulties without being recognized by anyone. So he begins his Rise on earth, not that he comes down from heaven or

↳ **Their savior will come down from heaven and at the very time of emergence, he appears among the people. But our savior is living among the people at the present moment and he accompanies and helps them with their troubles and difficulties without being recognized by anyone.**

Questions and Answers

By: Shahrzad Shahsavan
Translated by: Hannaneh Divan Beigi

What are the similarities and differences between the promised savior in Islam and other divine and non-divine faiths?

Similarities:

All of the common faiths and religions, esp. the divine ones, give the news of the appearance of a man of many values, under the influence of whose universal government, there will be justice, security and peace all around the world. No cruelty or transgression will be in the world. He will take back the rights of all oppressed people and life will be pro them. Leaning against the throne of justice, he will make a life of brotherhood and equity on earth.

Differences

The differences are more, one of which is the identity of the Savior, which in many is their Prophet, and in many others is unknown or vague and contradictory. Other differences are in his identity, his characteristics, his being alive, the time of his appearance, this presence and the manifestation and impression of a promised savior, his names and nicknames and many other features of him are subjects of disagreement among different faiths.

Detailed Answer

Introducing the last savior has been a subject for which different faiths and religions have tried to find a definition, but the variety of faiths in one hand, and the vastness of the subject on the other has hid and covered many of its aspects. Not having access to the first manuscripts of the divine books, except for Islam, and different sorts of deviances has obtruded the expression of a definite and perfect definition. All in all, the whole subject can be summarized in some main features:



- a. The common view points of faiths
The promise of his appearance
His elected and elevated character
His universal government
Establishing peace, justice and uprooting injustice and cruelty
The innocent and the righteous people inheriting the earth
- b. The different viewpoints of faiths
The identity of the promised savior and his nicknames

His sanctuary and spiritual levels

The common view points of faiths

Islam

This is one of the main beliefs of Islam, which many Qur'an verses and Hadiths clarify and discuss. One of the main instances of this reference is in this verse: "God has promised those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will certainly appoint them successors on earth..." (24:55)

Judaism

Judaism enunciates the appearance of Mashiach, saying that on *that day*, the great king, descended from Michael will stay (2) ... and many of the dead will rise, some for eternal life, and some other for eternal humility and shame. (3)

Christianity

Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox, they are all waiting for their savior: "But when the son of man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." (4)

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him for he dwells with you and will be in you" (5)

Zoroastrians

Followers of Zoroaster wait for three promised saviors who appear one after another with thousand years between each appearance, all of whom are children of Zoroaster, and the last of whom is *uv v/Ctvé*. "we praise the kingly glory of the strong one created by *Cjw/ra Mazda*,... when he renews the world ... when the dead rise and the living will face death" (6)

His elevated and elected character

All faiths elevate their survivor, but Islam gives special characteristics to him. In Islamic and esp. Shiite thinking, the survivor of the end of the time is at the high end of all positive humane features and divine attributes. Chastity, the meditator of divine grace, the gate of blessings and benefactions, the axis of life and the reason of peace and serenity are just some of these given features. Other faiths talk about his greatness and glory, some of which are inferable among these writings.

Universal government

Many faiths realize the government of the survivor as something extensive and global, in a way that all nations, religions and faiths, cultures and all people are under his command and will live in joy and content.

Islam

"He is Who sent His Prophet with guidance and the religion of truth and He might make it prevail over all other religions though the polytheists may detest it." (7)

According to this verse, with Imam Mahdi (AJ), Islam will enlighten all the world and all human beings will either acquiesce in his command, or be killed with his sword of justice.

Judaism

It's been said in the Psalms of David that one prays God to grant His Sharia, His land and His command to the prince and seigneur, to govern and rule from Sea to Sea, from river to river up onto the furthest destinations on the earth. (8)

Christianity

"...all of the people will gather beside him..." (9)

Universal peace and justice

In all the areas of discussion about the survivors, insist on the fact that he is there to institutionalize universal justice and peace, and to wipe out cruelty and injustice.

Islam

The gladdest tidings given to Muslims is the promise of the universal government, the defeat of cruelty and injustice and an ideal life, without any fears and horrors or terrors.

"God has promised those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will certainly appoint them successors on earth, just as He appointed those before them, and that he shall certainly establish religion (Islam) for them and that thereafter he will certainly exchange their fear for security. They shall worship Me and associate none with Me, and Whosoever disbelieves after these are surly the wicked ones" (10)

Judaism

He will judge your tribe with justice and he will evenhandedly behave the deprived and the pauper... he will debilitate all the cruel people... the virtuous will blossom and all nations on earth will call for him in joy. (11)

Who is it that will call for his justice... and will dominate the king by him ...(12)

Hinduism

Hinduism has this saying that the cycle of life will reach to the hands or a fair commander at the end of the time. (13)

The righteous and the innocent: the inheritors of earth

That the righteous and the innocent will inherit the earth has been stated in many faiths. Everyone has hopes for the day when the strong walls of cruelty are broken down and the innocent and the righteous will have power and dominance over the world.

Islam

And we intend to bestow our favor upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make them THE Imams and the heirs. (14)

“And indeed we did write in the Psalms (Zabur) after the Reminder (Torah) that My righteous Servants shall inherit the earth. (15)

Judaism

“For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the lord will inherit the land ... consider the blameless, observe the upright; a future await those who seek peace” (16)

Zoroastrians

It will belong to the win-



ning Sushiant and his other friends... Corruptors will be wiped out and the cheaters will be ostracized. (17) Sushiant is the name given to the survivor.

Differences between religions

There are two very basic differences between the ideas of different religions about the survivors, which are going to be shortly stated here.

The Identity of The survivor

Human beings have always been seeking a god and someone to worship and to seek shelter under his shadow, but

most of the time, they have chosen the wrong way or person. The idea of a survivor has had the same importance and position in history of man, as a result, they have always been seeking the victory of right against wrong, but they have committed the same mistake. In Islam, the promised survivor is the last Imam who is living, but hidden from the sight of man. He had different names and attributes in Islam, of which we have 182 in just one book. (18)

Zoroastrians call their survi-

vor or their Sushiant *Uvww/Ctyg*, while he is called *Kalki* in Hinduism.

The Status of the Promised Survivor in Different Faiths

Unfortunately the crucial and key issue of the appearance of the Survivor has not been receiving enough attention in faiths other than Islam. Followers of these faiths have not been paying enough attention to these subjects and feel no duty on their shoulders. On the contrary, Islam has been giving both an outstanding and highly great status to the Promised Imam,

and a heavy responsibility to the ones who expect his reappearance. Its suffices to know that for believers in Islam and in the promised Imam, He is the meditator for bounty and blessing, (20) he is innocent and sinless and the cause of peace and serenity (21), and that if he is not there on earth for one single moment, the earth will gallop all its inhabitants. (22)

Conclusion

Although different faiths and religions are waiting for the reappearance of the survivor,

the coming of the time of justice and kindness and freedom from cruelty and injustice, followers of these faiths and religions have gone astray and committed mistakes in knowing his greatness, identity and his character, and they are not doing what they must do during his absence. One must wish and pray that he will be achieving and winning on his bids of paving his way, clinging on the words of Holy Qur'an and walking on the path of truth and understanding.

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Encyclopedia



Shrine and Pilgrimage with an Emphasis on Intercultural Dialogue among Religions

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In today's world with the emergence of the intercultural approach and its dominance in the global sphere, it is necessary to identify the common points between religions as bases on which to establish a dialogue. Great shrines around the world are connected to one another while they are the symbols of different religious communities. By analyzing the different shapes of religious symbols, we can provide an opportunity to create a dialogue. Shrines present enough reasons for the people of the world to convince them of the unity of all the humanity.

Key words: dialogue, interculture globalization, discourse, pilgrimage, shrines

Introduction:

If a community, which holds tight to a certain series of cultural principles, wants to survive, it should pay closer attention to studying different theories and cultures to see how they develop and transform the world. This is not only a social contingency but an undeniable duty. As one of the most important fields in the contemporary world's intellectual and cultural developments, the theory of intercultural communication endeavors to replace the process of "antagonizing the other" with "acknowledging the other" in international developments. Those who believe that intercultural paradigm is a new alternative, try to use it as a practical strategy in the age of globalization to avoid regarding "Other" as necessarily a menace and thus antagonistic to the "Self" – despite the accelerating transformation of humankind.

Of the common cultural aspects among different religions which can also work as a starting point of a dialogue are pilgrimage and shrines. Pilgrimage is basically a religious phenomenon which creates a strong tie among the pilgrims. Pilgrimage goes beyond a mere ritual, ceremony or a religious visit despite the fact that it may include all these elements, as well. There are concomitantly three things necessary for a pilgrimage; a holy place, a holy path and a holy goal. According to some religions, pilgrimage is impossible without these tripartite mediators. (Hoving, 1374/1995, 6)

Pilgrims gather together in a common prominent time of their lives, become united, implement the ideas and patterns in their current life and make a pledge of friendship with people of the same culture and faith. It goes with-

As one of the most important fields in the contemporary world's intellectual and cultural developments, the theory of intercultural communication endeavors to replace the process of "antagonizing the other" with "acknowledging the other" in international developments.

out saying that the historical union between civilizations is in relation with cities such as Mecca, Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela, Delhi and Olympus.

In anthropology, pilgrimage could be analyzed as a symbol of a religious culture. Pilgrimage is produced as a cultural product in any community with religious bases; and becomes a norm and is followed by the people living in that community (Rivier, 1379, 247-8). Pilgrimage is an element of religious cultures which is not particular to any single nation and is found in all divine religions. Pilgrimage gives meaning to religious cultures and turns to a religious-social norm which is common to all the believers who worship God. Most communities agree on its importance and this unanimity is a kind of social consensus (Nikgozar, 1375, 280) which can help to establish a dialogue between divine religions.

Dialogue:

Literally, *Iqlvq/iw* (dialogue) in Persian it means "discussion, disputation, conversation, etc." (Dehkoda, pp.16928-31). Dialogue indicates the flow of meanings among a number of people. Through this flow of meaning, a new understanding and perception, which did not exist at the beginning of the dialogue, appears (Paya, 1381, 66-67). Dialogue connotes that both sides involved in it would like to have a peaceful coexistence. Either side should deem the contact necessary and welcome it (Toffler, 1376, 11).

Discourse:

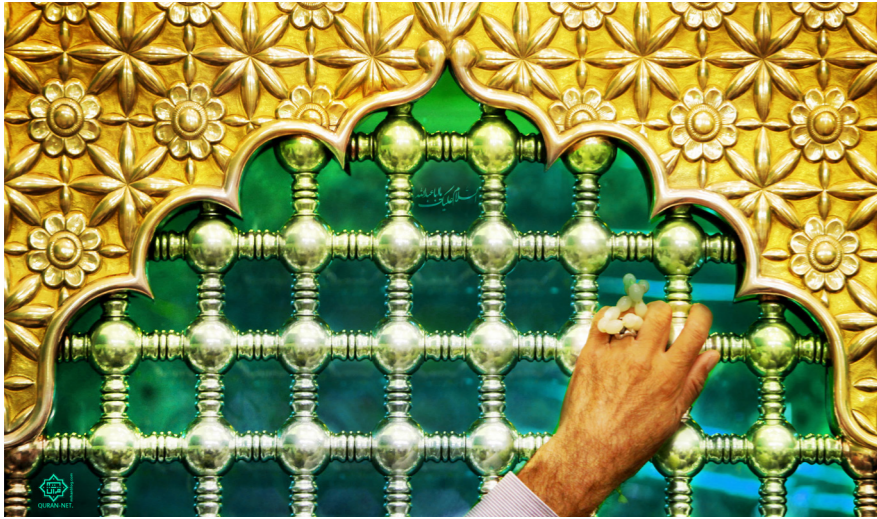
Discourse is not only related to what can be said or thought of, but also discusses who, when and how somebody can talk. Therefore, discourse discusses meaning in the social context, gives shape to one's subjectivity and determines the layers of access in socio-political relations. Discourse can change the horizons in the society and present a new social picture (Onan, 1989, 22).

In each discourse, the presence of the element of dialogue is fundamental (McDonnell, 1380/2001, 66)

Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication refers to the interactions between people whose cultural conceptions





and symbolic orders are so dissimilar that they understand and reflect on communicational phenomena in very dissimilar ways (Samovar, 1995, 58). Presumably, beside the general implication of intercultural communication, it specifically refers to communication between persons and thus it tries to examine issues – especially the ones related to cognition and mutual understanding between two people from two desperate cultures.

Globalization:

David Held and Anthony McGrew have tried to present a new conceptual and analytical framework for the perception and explanation of the world transformations. They present a clear-cut definition of globalization. According to them, globalization is a process (or a series of processes) which involves transformations in the organization of social relations and associations. These transformations are evaluated based on their depth, speed and their impact rate. They also include transcontinental, intercontinental and interregional flows as well as performance,

interactive and power networks (Held et al, 1999, 16).

Pilgrimage and Shrine

The word “Ziarat” (translated as pilgrimage) comes from the word “Zoor” which has many different meanings: originally it means giving up everything and living in seclusion. Therefore, the word “\cøgt” (meaning pilgrim) connotes that when somebody goes on a pilgrimage to visit someone, the pilgrim denies and gives up anything in the world but the goal of his or her pilgrimage (Ahmad ibn Fares, 443).

“Ziarat commonly denotes that the pilgrim pay tribute and show reverence to somebody to create an intimacy with him” (Tarihi, 1996, 319).

Pilgrimage means to make a journey to holy places and attend religious ceremonies. These places are called shrines and the visitors, pilgrims. In most religions, people go to visit holy places and there they perform special rituals and ceremonies. Interestingly enough, some of these places are holy for more than one religion. For instance,

both Muslims and Hindus go on pilgrimage to *õVcmjv/g"Uw/laiman*”, or what is alternatively called the *Shankaracharya* Temple (The Encyclopedia of Kelid-e Danesh).

To be continued.

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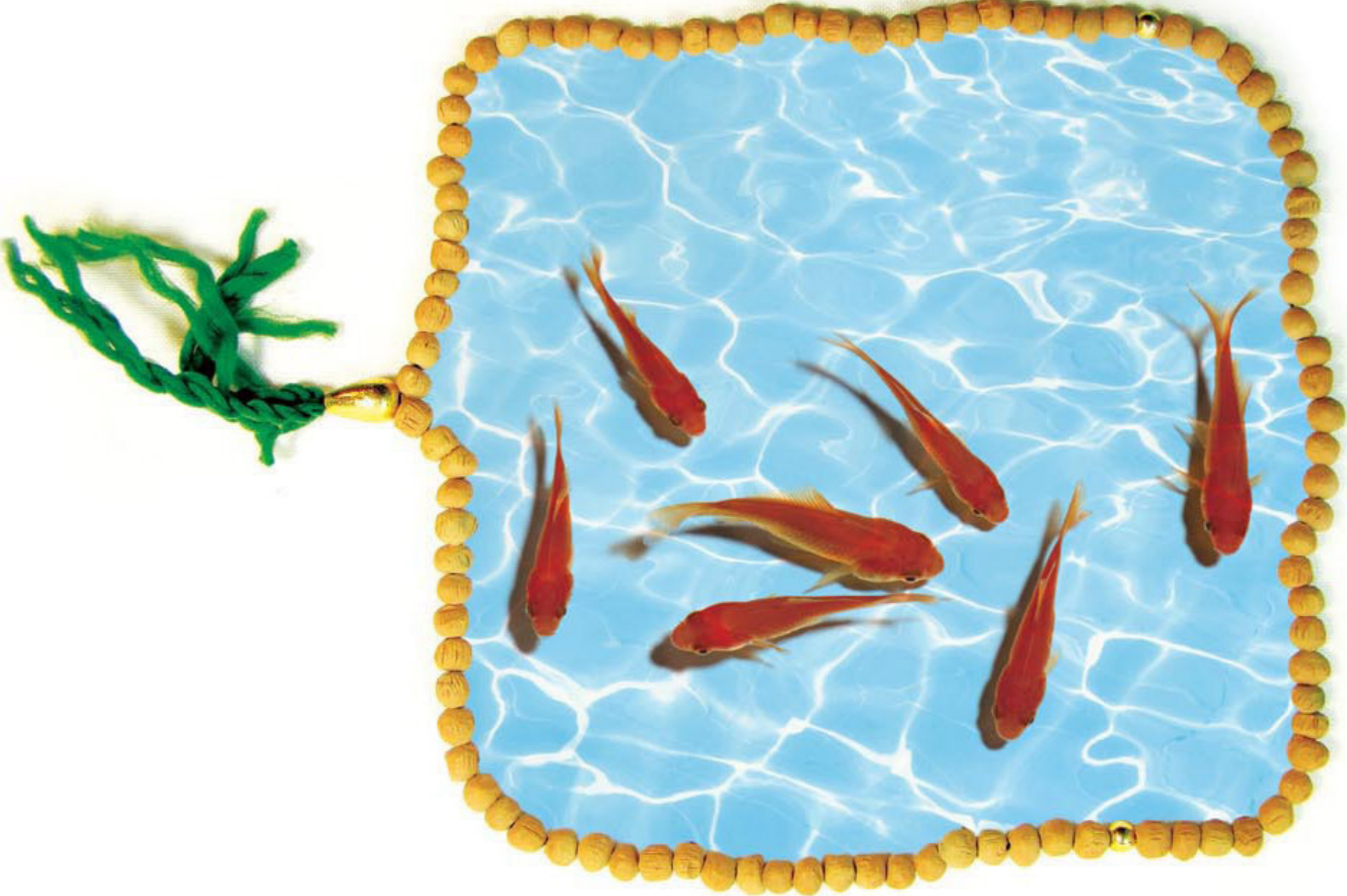
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Lifestyle



A Short History of Imam Mahdi's (AJ) Life

By Hoorieh Lajevardi

Translated by: Mohsen Hanif, Phd.

1. **From Birth to Occultation:** after his birth, Imam Mahdi (AJ) lived in concealment and under the custody of his father, Imam Hasan Al-Asgari (AS), for five years. One of the most important things that Imam Hasan Al-Asgari (AS) did in this period was to introduce Imam Mahdi (AJ) to the Shiite elites so that they would have consensus on the issue of the Imamate in the future. Therefore, a selected number of people would come to visit Mahdi (AJ) when Imam Hasan Al-Asgari (AS) deemed it necessary.

2. **Minor (short term) Occultation:** after the martyrdom of Imam Hasan Al-Asgari (AS) in 260 AH (874 AD), Imam Mahdi's Minor Occultation began and continued until 329 AH (941 AD). In this period, Imam Mahdi (AJ) dealt with people's affairs through his four deputies.

3. **Major (Long term) Occultation:** this period began in 329 AH (941 AD), when the last of His Highness's deputies died, and it will continue so long as God thinks it is necessary. In this period, the responsibility for answering people's questions and religious queries are on the shoulder of his common deputies and His Highness has not appointed any specific person to take this status any longer.

4. **Sovereignty (Reappearance):** after he Returns, Imam Zaman (AJ) will establish a world-wide government based on Islamic Sharia' under which the entire world will be filled with justice.

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The Concept of Occultation:

Occultation means to be invisible to others while being present.

Occultation refers to a period of time when Imam Mahdi (AJ) is invisible to people and they cannot see him while His Highness is present and lives among people.

The Background of the Occultation:

Living in Occultation has not just been particular to God's latest *Hujjat*. According to the narratives, some of the greatest Prophets of God have lived a part of their lives in occultation which was because of what God had determined and not for personal reasons or familial whims. For instance, the holy Prophets, Idris, Yusuf, Moses, Jesus, etc. each have lived for some time in occultation depending on the circumstances.

The Philosophy and Reason behind Occultation

1. A Divine mystery
2. Protecting the Imam's life

3. Independence and freedom from any obligation to unite with others

1. Examining Followers

2. Training people

The Background of Imam Zaman's (AJ) Occultation

The Abbasid caliphs would restrict the activities of Shiite Imams. They adopted a new strategy since the time of Imam Reza (AS). Ma'mun's policy was to invite Imam Reza (AS) to his court to restrict him and keep him under close surveillance and consequently separated and distanced Imam Reza from the Shiites. The next caliphs resorted to the same cruel tactic with regard to Imam Javad (AS), Imam Hadi (AS) and Imam Hassan Al-Asgari (AS).

Imam Hadi (AS) and Imam Hasan Al-Asgari were taken to the City of Samarra which was the capital of the

Abbasid government. These

two great men lived under close surveillance and complete control of the governmental forces for all their lives.

Visiting these two holy figures was so difficult for the Shiites that sometimes they had to risk their own and the Imams' life in order to see them.

During the Imamate of these two Imams, it was also usual to communicate with people through the appointed deputies.

The Minor Occultation (Ghaybat Al-Soghra):

When Imam Hasan Al-Asgari (AS) was martyred in 260 AH (846 AD), the Imamate of the twelfth Imam began. Since then Imam Mahdi's Minor

Occultation, which is well known as "*Ijc{dcv}Cn/Uqijtc*", commenced and continued for about seventy years until 329 AH (941 AD).

The most important characteristic of the Minor Occultation is that the people were indirectly in contact with the Imam through his deputies. By means of them, Imam gave his messages to people and answered their questions. Moreover, sometimes they could find the opportunity to pay a visit to their Imam.

The Four Deputies of Imam Mahdi (AJ)

The special deputies of the Imam who were all among the Shiite elites and were directly chosen by His Highness are in the following order:

1. 'Uthman ibn Sa'id 'Amri

He was Imam Mahdi's first deputy who died in 267 AH and was also Imam Hadi's and Imam Asgari's deputy.

2. Muhammad ibn 'Uthman ibn Sa'id 'Amri

He is the first deputy's son who replaced his father when he died. After forty years of work in this position he died in 305 AH.

3. Abul-Qasim Husayn ibn Ruh Nowbakhti

He was one of the executors of the will and delegates of the second deputy. He had a special status among the governmental authorities; a position which helped to solve many of the Shiites' problems in that time. Eventually, he died in 326 A.H after twenty one years of activity as the deputy of Imam Zaman (AJ).

4. Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad Samuri

Six days before Samuri's death, a letter signed by Imam Mahdi (AJ) was issued in which he had predicted Samuri's death and informed that there are no deputies after him and the Major Occultation will begin afterwards.

Notes:

. Reappearance of 12th Imam "Imam of the Time the Mahdi" as "the restorer of religion and justice who will rule before the end of the world".

Source:

Pgikp (1, 2)



Du'a & Supplication



Nahjul Balagha Imam Ali (AS) The Wonderful Sermon [Sermon 82]

Translated by
Syed Mohammad Ali Aon

The Opening of the Sermon

All praise be to God who rose above all [else] through the power [of His creation]. And yet remained proximate [to every being!] through His Might ¹. [God] Who is the Giver of all gains and advantages, [and Who is] the Provider of openings out of every adversity and terrible situation. I praise Him for His compassionate leanings [towards us] and consummate graces. I believe in Him as the first [of the causes] and the prime [of the initiators]. And I seek guidance from Him Who is the Nearest of guides ², and seek help of Him Who is powerful and overpowering, and rely on Him, believing Him to be a sufficing Helper.

The Testimony to Muhammad's Prophethood

And I witness that Muhammad, God bless him and his lineage, is His created slave ³ and messenger, whom He sent to execute His Will and present the concluding arguments and final warnings.

The Imam's Instruction

I order you, O servant of God, to fear Him! Who [taught you] through parables, and fixed the span of your lives, and Who enabled you to wear the clothes [to protect yourselves from heat and cold], and widened the [means of] your livelihood, and Who had all the statistics of your and about you, and Who had a recompense in store [for all your acts in this life], and Who had favoured you with wide-ranging benefits [in this world], and furnished you with the vast range of gifts, and warned you [against the insubordination] with convincing arguments⁴. [God] Who has counted your numbers and assigned to you [various] periods [of lives].

World's Description

In the halt which is [nothing but] a testing place, the place in which you are to be examined, and be accountable [to God] for [the activities of] it, and a home for admonition. The drinking- place of this world has muddy water, and a water-hole, [full of] slush! The sights of it are attractive, yet the end-news is: nothingness. [The world is but]

a shifting illusion, and a flickering light, and a vanishing shadow, and a crooked support. Once the one [who, in the beginning had aversion to it] gets familiar with it, and once the one [who did not have real knowledge of it] reposes his trust in it, it, [like a violent beast], stands on it's hind legs [unseating the rider] hunting him down with it's ropes, killing him instantly with it's arrows, entangling [the prey] with lines, leading him to the light and narrow resting place, and to the loneliness of it, to inspect his real station, and the rewards or punishments for the deeds done. On this pattern, one generation has followed the other, death not sparing the living, and the survivors not stopping from treading on the footsteps of the foregone, and travelling together in flocks, to the end of the ends, to the destination of death!

The Resurrection

Till the time when all matters are furnished with, and all periods have elapsed, and the Day of Resurrection dawns, [God] shall make them come out from the vaults of their graves, and from nests of the birds, and from the dens of the beasts of pray, and from [other] locations where death overtook them. The dead [shall leave the afore-said places], responding hastily to His call, going quickly to the final destinations assigned to them by Him, [going] in large groups in silence, [or] standing in lines, the [Divine] Eye piercing through them, and the divine caller's voice reaching everyone of them. Clad in the clothes



of submission and humility, wearing the marks of lowliness and surrender. [To them] all the way-outs have vanished, and all hopes are lost. Now the hearts are silent, empty!

The voices have turned to whisper in the awe [of the day]. The sweat has reigned [their lips], and the fear has assumed great proportions, and the ears are thunder- struck for the scolding of the caller, to the Final Judgement, and to the Recompense, to either the exemplary, or to everlasting rewards!

The Resurrected

These have been the creations of Divine power, and owned through Divine Might, taken away [from the world] through death, becoming [for a time], the contents of the graves, turning to fragments and debris! Resurrected [now] one by one. [In the world], they were given time to find the exit [salvation], and were guided to the highway, and were allowed to live for the time that was enough to earn the pleasure of God. [Through God's appointed messengers], the darkness of the doubts had been removed [from

them]. They were made free to race as the fine and pedigree horses do [for a given prize], and the time to ponder over and obtain that which was required of them, the ample time one is allowed to take when searching a lost artefact at night with an oil-lamp in his hand, [taking account of] the period of time, and the movement for action.

The Spiritual Counsel

Oh, what parabolic examples, and what curative and exhortatory sermons [they are]. If they could reach pure hearts, and listening ears, and resolute opinions, and experienced minds.

I The Ideal Man

Therefore, fear God, fearing of the one who hears and submits, and sins but confesses. Who feels scared, but acts, and who took precautionary measures and did it promptly. And who believed and made his belief good! And who was warned and he took the warning. And who was asked to be on guard and he did it. And who heard the divine caller and responded. And who returned and repented. And who neglected the actions of the

one he followed. And who was shown the way and he saw it. And who made haste in getting that which he desired. And who attained salvation by running by running away [from sins]. And who thus benefited from his savings [of good performances in this world]. And who made his soul, heart, and thoughts presentable. And who has *in/jcdkvgf* his place of return (i.e. Hereafter) with good deeds. And who has loaded [his provision for the journey] on the back of his mount. For the day of his departure, and for the cause of his journey, for the moments of his needs, for the place of his indigence. He has sent ahead of him [that which is needed] for the place of his stay!

II. The True God-wariness (Taqwa)

Fear God, O servants of God, and aim at the objectives⁵, for which God has created you. And fear Him to the utmost degree, as God warns you that you be beware of Him. Deserve that which He has Provided for you. Place yourself in a position to ask Him to fulfil his promise! And to spare you from the terrors of the Hereafter.

III. God's Blessings on Man and their Commended Usages

God has given you [the faculty of] hearing to hear and memorise only that which is important for it⁶ [and for the soul]. And He has bestowed [the faculty of] seeing upon you, so that it leaves out that which blinds [the mind]. And He has given you a body that holds all parts and limbs together, the curving and the bending organs in harmonious and fitting shapes and ages, [each] body of a limb continuing to yield [the required] benefits. And the hearts that find the means of sustenance [for the limbs and the body], through God's *urtgcf/qww*" provisions! Those that come necessarily through His Grace, as come the barriers [against accidents, diseases, etc.] that ensure peace. God has fixed the span of your lives [although] He has hidden it from you. And He has left for you vestiges and relics of those who come [to this world] before you, so that you may learn from them, [vestiges that show] how vast were the shares⁷ of enjoyment, and pleasure of life, available to them! And how long they were allowed to live! Yet death overtook [even] them, in front of their hopes and desires, and cut them

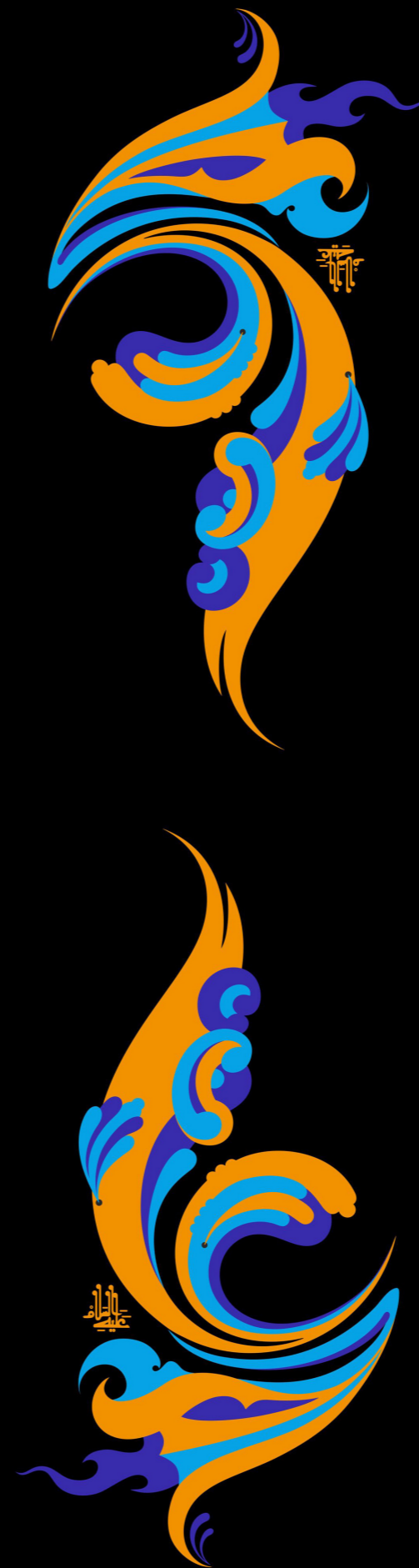
off [from the luxuries of life] root-and – branch. They did not make provision for it [death], while enjoying the soundness of limbs and body, and did not learn the lesson in their virgin of times. Do not the people of fair and full skins and youthful bodies wait except for the wrinkles and the withered body of the old-age? And do not those enjoying the blessing of sound health wait except for the occurrence of diseases? And do not those enjoying the period of life wait except for it's coming to an end? With the time of leaving so near! And of the departure so at hand! [together with] the anxiety, the restlessness, and the disconcert of pain, having to swallow the saliva in extreme sadness, and having to appeal for help from one's servants, friends, and relatives! And having to ask for *sueeour* from near and dear to one! So, were those relatives of any help? And the female-criers of any use? When the departed was left in the locality of the dead a prisoner? And in the narrowness of grave, alone? [Then the time comes when] the insects have consumed the skin, and the sequential disasters took away his freshness [that comes from life]. The violent winds wiped out the remains of him, and the elapsing of days and nights obliterated all he was to be remembered by!

[In the Graveyard]

Bodies emaciated and dried, yet once they were tender-skinned! Bones fossilised, yet once they were strong! Souls now in custody with the weights of the sins [of the body], believing [now] in all the hidden news. Now, they [the souls] are not in a position to enhance any of the good work, nor to secure God's pardon for their sins.

Addressing the Living

Are not you the sons, or the fathers, brothers, or relatives, of the same people [who went through the processes of dying and decay]? Walking in their steps? Traversing their way? Treading the same highway? Yet the hearts are obdurate, in not getting their proper share, oblivious to the right way for them, following the course not meant for them, as if [religious commands and obligations] were concerned with some other



people, and as if the right way lay in getting the worldly possessions. Know that you shall have to cross the *Uktev*." with all its treacherous slips and downfalls, with all the fears of an erroneous step, with all its varying degrees of frightfulness. So fear God, fearing Him being wise, intelligent! Whose heart is pre-occupied with reflections, whose body has been made tired by God-fearing, whose night-worship has kept awake even the little sleep he was used to take, whose hot and scorching mid days are made thirsty [through fasting] by his hopes of Divine rewards, whose renunciation of the world serves as a barrier to his carnal desires, whose glorification of God runs smoothly on his tongue, whose performance of good acts, through God-fearing, was on time! Who avoided the "*ytqpi/vwtpkpiu*" alongside the highway, following the straightest of the ways to his desired destination, not deflected from his course by the deceptive deflections, not deluded by the obscure and dubious matter, victorious with the happiness of the good tiding, and comfortableness of life [to come], in the most enjoyable of sleep, in the most peaceful of the days. He [it was] who crossed the bridge of this world, being praiseworthy, arriving in the hereafter, auspicious. He [it was] who hastened to perform God-fearing acts, and acted quickly in the [short] time available. He [it was] who made provisions for his *vqoqtty*." in the [present] day, and considered what he could send ahead of him [i.e. acts of worship, acts of charity, etc.]. [And now] sufficient is Heaven as the recompense and the reward! And adequate is Hell as the punishment and the evil consequence. And enough is God as the Revenge-taker, as a support-giver. And sufficient is the angelic-journal as the opponent and prosecutor. I command you to fear God who has fulfilled the obligation on His part through sending warnings [and Prophets]. And who had established the argument only after laying out ways of guidance for you. And who cautioned you against the enemy who stalks through-to hearts⁸. Thus, he leads people astray, to spiritual death! He gives hope- inspiring promises. He decorates for people sinful crimes [so that they do not look what they are]. And of great and punishable errors, he makes a light-stuff, till when he wins over his companion gradually. And when all es-

cape-routes are shut on his prey, he repudiates all [sins], thus for he had decorated, and that which he thus for had made the light of, he attaches due importance, and warned about that against which he had given assurance.

IV. Of the same sermon in the description of man

Is this he whom God created in the darkness of the wombs? And behind the curtains of the inside [of a woman], of the sperm-drop, full of living cells. Then turning it to a faceless blood-clot, and [from the blood-clot] into an embryo, and then into a suckling baby. Then making him grow to boyhood, and from it into manhood, giving him retentive heart, and a communicating tongue, to understand things, having tested them, and refrain from those [acts] forbidden [by human reasoning and religious instructions]. [But that which took place was : that] as soon as his faculties attained fullness, and as soon as his body acquired the highest degree of growth, he runs away waxing proudly⁹, straying about aimlessly and carelessly, drawing [water] in the big bucket of his whims and passions, toiling hard for the worldly gains, immersed in the sensual delights, chasing the cravings for pleasure as soon as they come to mind, not taking account of a passable calamity, and not fearing God. He dies deceived by his temptations, having lived in his errors only for a short time! Not giving any return of, or compensation for, this life. Not fulfilling any of the religious obligations. Death overtakes him in the remaining period of his unruliness, and in the [mid] course of exuberance.

Prior to Death

He remained *lost* [not knowing what to do next]. He passed the night awake, in the deluge of pains, and in the ways of diseases and sufferings, between a full brother, and a compassionate father, and the crier of *yqg*"in grief, beating her chest in excitement [the mother]. Yet the man is oblivious [to all this happening around him], unconscious! And in the severity of disease that has overpowered his senses, and the groan that is painful to hear! And the *rwm*"of death that is agonising, and the *ftkxg/qwv*"of life that is exhausting. Then, he was lowered into the layers of the shroud, in



despair. When he was dragged, he accepted it obediently, showing no resistance whatsoever. Then, he was cast into the [planks] of wood (i.e. coffin) [wherein he lay] like the beast of burden that came home after a long journey, dejected and tired ! Diseases having eaten up all his fats and flesh. Now, he is carried by the servants and the friends, and quickly responding sympathisers. [They are taking him to] the home of his homelessness, the home wherein no one shall ever be able to see him. Now, as soon as those who escorted the deceased to his final resting place, went back, and the mourners returned, he was made to sit in the grave quaintly, for the perplexing questioning, and the stumbling examination. And there the greatest of afflictions, [if one fails to test], is : the descent in the boiling waters, and roasting in the fires, and the flare-ups of Hell [on him], and the severities of the whistling Fire ! With no comforting-break in between, and no rest-providing *ngv/wr*"in the chastisement, with no strength to withstand [left in the punished], not even death available, nor the *lull* of slumber, between many and manifold deaths, and chastisement running with time. We take refuge in God [from all that!]. O servants of God! Where are those gifted with long life and enjoying it? [Some of them] were taught, and understood, [while some of them] were warned, yet remained oblivious. They were blessed with the soundness [of health and livelihood], yet they forgot [to make provision

for the Hereafter]. They were the people who were granted a long respite, and were given all the blessings [of life], and were cautioned about the painful [end, for the disobedient]. And were promised great rewards. [They were told in clear terms] to refrain from destroying sins, and from blemishes that incur God's wrath!

O people, possessors of the faculties of seeing and hearing, the possessors of property and peace, is there any place of refuge? Is there a way to liberation? Or, a place one may take shelter in? Or, a [possible] escape? Or, a returning place? If *pq*. then how are you perverted? And where to you turn away? And with what you have chosen to be deceived? Verily, the share each of you has in this earth, [the wide and the long earth], is just the measure of his body, wherein he lies with his cheeks soiled!

Now is the time, O servants of God, when the noose is still away from the neck, and the soul is still free. In this time, of the availability of guidance, when [your] bodies are in comfort, when in the courtyard of the worlds, there are many who would give assistance, in the respite which is still available, and in the opportunity of a fresh start, and when the prospects of penance are there, and the prevailing conditions offer a wide range [of God-pleasing acts], before the narrowness of the choice and the lightness of the place, and the fearful weakness, before the arrival of the awaited absent, before the seizing of the all-powerful, all-Mighty.

Footnotes:

God is with everything, not in the sense of physical companionship. The Qu'ran also says, "And He is with you wherever you are; and God sees the things you do. (57:4)

² We are nearer to him [man] than the jugular vein. (50:15)

³ Immaculate is He who carried His servant on a Journey by night from the sacred Mosque to the farthest Mosque whose environs we have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs. (17:1)

⁴ Say, to God belongs the mind-and-heart reaching argument. (6:150)

⁵ The main objective is described by the Qu'ran in the verse: I have not created Jinn and mankind, except to serve me. (51:56)

⁶ This is in the vein of the famous tradition: it is a sign of one's excellence in Islam if he ignores that which does not concern him.

⁷ The word *mjncs* has been translated by Arthur J. Arberry as part, but, in my view, share is perhaps, more appropriate (c.f. Qu'ran 2:199). But the Qu'ranic verse, which may be the direct source of this sentence of the sermon, occurs in the chapter of Repentance (9:69), and here again, the word share is more to the points.

⁸ This enemy is Satan. C.f. the Qu'ran: Satan invites people to infidelity and godlessness. (59:16)

But when a man adopts godlessness, he disowns him [ibid]

He overwhelms man and makes him forget the glorification of God. (58:19)

Do not let Satan deflect you from the right path. (43:62)

Satan is your enemy, so take him as he is. (35:6)

We also sent Our message to the nations that came before you, but Satan decorated for them their on-going deeds. (16:63)

Satan incites men to the evil. (41:36)

But the verse which may be the source of this part of the sermon is the 22nd Verse in the chapter of Abraham that says: When all said and done in the Day of judgement, Satan will address his followers thus: God promised you, and I promised you. But His Promise was a true one, and mine, a false one. He fulfilled His Promise, and I let you down! But I had no power over you, except that I invited you [to my way] and you [willingly] responded. So do not blame me, blame yourselves. And [now] neither I am in position to help you, nor you are in position to help me!

⁹ And when you mention your one and only God in the Qu'ran, they turn in their traces in aversion. (17:49)

And when Our sign are recited to such a man he turns away, waxing proud, as though he heard them not, and in his ears were heaviness; so give him good tidings of a painful chastisement. (31:6)

اللَّهُمَّ ادْخِلْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ السُّرُورَ،

Detailed Commentary

In 'al-Misbah' and in 'al-Balad al-Amin', Shaykh al-Kaf'amiy, as well as Shaykh al-Shah'ud in 'al-Majm'ah,' have narrated that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said that one who says the following supplication after each obligatory prayer in Ramadhan will have all his sins forgiven up to the Resurrection Day:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah; the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

اللَّهُمَّ ادْخِلْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ السُّرُورَ،

alljhumma adkhil `al; ahliil-qub'ris-surror
O Allah: (please do) bring in pleasure to the inhabitants of graves (i.e. the dead.)

اللَّهُمَّ اغْنِ كُلَّ فَقِيرٍ،

alljhumma aghni kulla faq'ir

O Allah: (please do) enhance all poor ones.

اللَّهُمَّ اشْبِعْ كُلَّ جَائِعٍ،

alljhumma ashbi' kulla jai`i

O Allah: (please do) satisfy all hungry ones.

اللَّهُمَّ اكْسُ كُلَّ عُرْيَانٍ،

alljhummaksu kulla `uryan

O Allah: (please do) provide all the naked with clothes.

اللَّهُمَّ اقْضِ دَيْنَ كُلِّ مَدِينٍ،

alljhummaqt'i dayna kulli mad'in

O Allah: (please do) help all the debtors settle their debts.

اللَّهُمَّ فَرِّجْ عَنَّا كُلَّ مَكْرُوبٍ،

alljhumma farij `an kulli makr'ib

O Allah: (please do) relieve all the aggrieved ones.

اللَّهُمَّ رُدِّ كُلَّ غَرِيبٍ،

alljhumma rudda kulla ghar'ib

O Allah: (please do) help all the strangers to return home.

اللَّهُمَّ فَكِّ كُلَّ أَسِيرٍ،

alljhumma fukka kulla as'ir

O Allah: (please do) release all prisoners.

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ كُلَّ قَائِدٍ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ،

alljhumma a'vli' kulla f'isidin min

um'ril-muslim'in

O Allah: (please do) rectify all the Muslims' affairs that are wrong.

اللَّهُمَّ اشْفِ كُلَّ مَرِيضٍ،

alljhumma shfi kulla mar'ib

O Allah: (please do) heal all the ailed ones.

اللَّهُمَّ سُدِّ فَقْرَنَا بِغِنَاكَ،

alljhumma sudda faqran; bighin;k

O Allah: (please do) fill in our poverty with Your richness.

اللَّهُمَّ غَيِّرْ سُوءَ حَالِنَا بِحُسْنِ حَالِكَ،

alljhumma ghayyir s'`a ;lin; bi'usni ;lik

O Allah: (please do) change our ill manners through Your excellent manners.

اللَّهُمَّ اقْضِ عَنَّا الدَّيْنَ وَأَغْنِنَا مِنَ الْفَقْرِ،

alljhummaqt'i `annad-dayna wa aghnin;

minal-faqr

O Allah: (please do) help us settle our debts and save us from poverty.

إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

innaka `al; kulli shay`in qad'ir

verily, You have power over all things.



PROMISE

Author: Minooei

Translator: Rezvan Sadoughi

He had come back home from exam and was lying in bed;

-Thank you God, it was a hard exam but I passed it with flying colors, now I should keep my promise, I had promised my lord¹ to do a good deed or help someone if I passed the exam with flying colors.

As he was thinking, he got up standing beside the window watching the very last autumn leaves fall which had been painted by marvelous colors of yellow, red and orange, then he saw a young boy stepping on every one of them and enjoying the rustling of the leaves, then an infirm old man carrying a heavy backpack caught his eyes, the old man sighed and put his backpack down, then sat on the ground leaning against the wall. His appearance showed that he was poor, and as he was leaning against the wall he started to talk with God, he couldn't be clearly heard but Joseph heard him saying "Oh' Lord! I am starving"

Joseph was focusing on the old man and his remarks when his mother suddenly called him: Joseph lunch is ready, let's have lunch, at that time Joseph remembered his promise;

-«This is as good as it gets»

He rushed to the kitchen,

- Mommy can I give a portion of today's lunch to somebody?

- Mother: sure, but to whom?

- An old man sitting outside beneath my window, I found him hungry.

Joseph's mother which was happy to hear this started serving the food in a plate and gave it to Joseph.

Joseph took the plate happily and ran to the old man

- Here you are Sir.

As the old man received the plate he became happy and told Joseph: God bless your heart.

Having heard this sentence, Joseph became glad, not only did he do a good deed and delight someone's heart but also he kept his promise. He put his head up and said: thank you God, thanks my compassionate lord².

1. Lord: 12th living Imam of the Muslim

2. Lord: 12th living Imam of the Muslim

The Rescue Vessel

My compassionate lord¹, you are the rescue vessel of all human beings, of those who are drowning, drowning in the sea of ignorance, oppression and problems. Your aim is to rescue those who are drowning no matter if that person is old or young, rich or beautiful, black or white
My compassionate lord, I wish I will be the passenger of your vessel

Author: Somayeh Minooei

Translator: Rezvan Sadoughi

1. Lord: 12th living Imam of the Muslim

