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# The Final

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

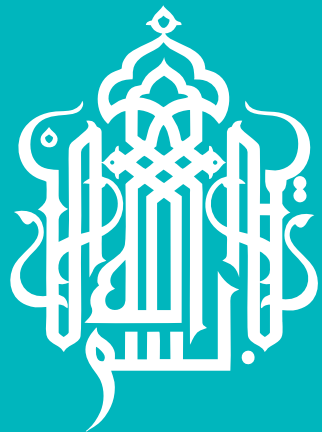
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# Imam Mahdi

Imam Mahdi in the Quran  
Imam Mahdi in the Sermon of Ghadir  
The Special Deputies of Imam Mahdi  
Question and Answer  
Teenage Corner

# P E





It is narrated from Imam Mahdi to have  
said to his Shias,

«إِنَّا غَيْرُ مُهْمَلِينَ لِمُرَاعَاتِكُمْ وَلَا نَاسِينَ لِدِكْرِكُمْ»<sup>1</sup>

«Surely , we do not neglect your conditions  
nor are we forgetful of your remembrance .»

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1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 53, p. 175.



## The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

One of the points about the Imam of the Age (May Allah hasten to his appearance, and peace be upon him) is that his Majesty is the Inviter to Allah. Looking at him and his behavior is a way to show sincerity and slavery to Allah Almighty, as we read in a supplication when we address him:

« السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَرَبَّائِي آيَاتِهِ »<sup>1</sup>

*“Peace be upon you, O the Inviter to Allah, and the place of manifestation of His signs!”*

The fact is that the prophets, the friends of Allah, the saints, and the pure souls who shine in our lives, to the world, and into the whole existence (in which Imam Mahdi is one of them) are the signs and the manifestation of Allah. This is a point that should be noted. We take notice and recourse to the Imam of the Age and humble ourselves before his Majesty so that it may lead us to humbling before Allah, and to asserting our slavery to Him Almighty.

1. Ziyārat Āl-e Yāsīn.



# The Final



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## Editorial

The Messenger of Allah and the infallible Imams have talked so much about Imam Mahdi and the signs of his advent at different times; even they have specified the details about him, his facial features, and his characteristics to the degree that is not seen about other infallible Imams. All of these attentions are because of several reasons:

Mentioning his Majesty’s features is to know and disgrace the lying people who have misused religious beliefs and introduced themselves as the promised Mahdi, during history.

Besides, talking profusely about Imam Mahdi and his coming is a factor for inserting confidence into the hearts of people and for letting them know that a better future is waiting for them.

Moreover, by this way, the believers and the poor know that Allah has not abandoned them; rather, He supports them by His divine proof, who is the infallible Imam. Through this support, they will not be afraid of anything or anybody, and go forward under the leadership of the Imam.

Finally, paying attention to the features of the Imam, people know who can be the Imam’s deputy during the period of Occultation; a leader who has to be close to those characteristics and attributes of the Imam to lead people as the “*Valī Faqīh*” (the Guardian of the Jurist). Now, if these characteristics of the Imam and the signs of his appearance were not described in our Islamic narrations, people would be misled in many political, social, and spiritual matters; and would join the East and the West, instead of the Right Way.

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Many authentic traditions refer to this point that the best example of the truth will happen at the end of the time when the Last Imam arises.

# Imam Mahdi in the Quran

## Surah al-'Isrā', verse 81

Allah in Surah al-'Isrā', verse 81 tells the Prophet,

﴿وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا﴾

“And say, ‘Truth has come and falsehood has departed. Indeed, is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart.’”

## An explanatory narration:

«عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام في قوله عز وجل: (وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ) قال: «إذا قام القائمُ ذَهَبَتْ دَوْلَةُ الْبَاطِلِ»<sup>1</sup>

It is narrated from Imam al-Bāqir (the fifth Imam of Shia) to have said regarding the meaning of “And say, ‘Truth has come and falsehood has departed.’”, “Whenever the Upriser (Imam al-Mahdi) arises the authority of falsehood will be annihilated.”

## Points:

**1- When the truth comes there is no room for falsehood:** The verse tells us that both the truth and the falsehood will never be

1. 'Usūl al-Kāfī, vol. 8, p. 287, Hadith 432.



in full authority. Wherever there is a falsehood, the truth is not there and vice versa. This means that when the last Imam comes since he will have a full authority over the world, falsehood will not be found anywhere. Yes, it is not impossible for the truth and the falsehood to exist partially at the same time and to oppose each other, but the final victory of the truth will be achieved at the time of the advent of Imam Mahdi and the evil will be uprooted forever.

**2- The promise of Allah will be fulfilled:** Allah ordains the Prophet to tell people that the truth will finally overcome the falsehood. Allah's promise will never fail. Many authentic traditions refer to this point that the best example of the *truth* will happen at the end of the time when the Last Imam arises. It is also important to note that falsehood will have power if is practiced

within a powerful and organized government. Therefore, if the corrupt governments lose their authority, all forms of falsehood that are dependent on them will become powerless and extinct. When the Imam comes and his government takes root on the earth, it is the time when the truth, instead of falsehood, will be widespread and powerful.

**3- Falsehood is doomed to depart:** Allah clearly says that falsehood will never survive forever since "*falsehood, [by nature], is ever bound to depart*". It means that as long as the Imam has not come, those who are with the truth should not be disappointed even if falsehood appears to be dominant and mighty. As a result, those who follow the truth should always try their best to move against the falsehood and hope to ease the path for the Imam to come sooner.



**The light from Allah, the Exalted, the Glorified, is entwined within me, and then within Ali bin Abī Tālib, then within his descendants until the Upriser al-Mahdi who will re-establish the rule of Allah, and any right that is ours..."**

## Imam Mahdi in the Sermon of Ghadīr

The idea that when the world is ending a savior will appear to save mankind from injustice, oppression, and tyranny is shared among the three divine religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It also appears in some other religions. This idea has proceeded seriously in both Shia and Sunni's viewpoint in which Imam Mahdi's revolution is aimed at changing the prevailing human culture so that it can fulfill the Islamic



However, the Prophet does not suffice to mentioning only the name of his last successor so, in the third step, he says in detail about the characteristics of Imam Mahdi while introducing the Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali) as his successor and referring to the eleven Imams after Ali

message and make the world a safe, positive, and constructive environment for everyone. The Twelver Shias believe that Imam Ali was the Prophet's first successor then, after the life of him another man like him came next till it was the time of the twelfth one who is Imam Mahdi and, like the previous Imams, is one of the descendants of the Prophet. Shia believes that he is now existent and manages people's problems and looks for their needs even though, he is in occultation. Many Hadiths are having been narrated about the Promised Mahdi from the Prophet and the Shiite infallible Imams confirming this claim. The sermon of Ghadīr is one of the sound Hadiths and convincing narrations that is quoted from the Prophet stated in both Shiite and Sunni sources including some of the characteristics of the Islamic promised Savior (Imam Mahdi).





### A fleeting glance at the incident of Ghadīr-e Khumm

Ten years after the Emigration (10 A.H. / 632 A.D.), the Messenger of Allah asked people in different places to join him in his last pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>1</sup> On this pilgrimage, he taught them how to perform Hajj in a correct and unified form. This was the first time that Muslims with this magnitude gathered in one place in the presence of the Prophet. On his way to Mecca, more than seventy thousand people followed him and on the fourth day of *Dhū al-Hijjah*, more than one hundred thousand Muslims had entered Mecca.<sup>2</sup>

While returning from his last pilgrimage, when the Prophet and the crowd of people reached a place called Ghadīr-e-Khum on the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Dhū al-Hijjah*<sup>3</sup>, the Prophet received the following command of Allah,<sup>4</sup>

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ...﴾<sup>5</sup>

“O the Messenger! Announce that which has been revealed to you from your Creator and Nurturer, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the [deceitful] people...”

1. Al-Sunan al-Kubrā, by Nasā'ī, vol. 4, pp. 49 & 57; Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, by Ibn-e Kathīr, vol. 5, p. 164.

2. Al-Ghadīr, by Amīnī, vol. 1, p. 9.

3. Al-Durr al-Mansūr, by Suyūfī, vol. 3, p. 19.

4. Tafsīr al-Kabīr, by Rāzī, vol. 12, p. 399; Al-Durr al-Mansūr, by Suyūfī, vol. 3, p. 117.

5. The Quran, 5:67.

In this verse, the Prophet is reminded of the extraordinary significance of the task that had been assigned to him, and he is guaranteed protection from any dangers that might result from proclaiming the message!

Whereas Ghadīr-e-Khum was a place where people from different provinces used to greet each other before taking different routes for their homes, the Prophet stopped at that place to convey the message to the pilgrims before they dispersed. He sent for all people who have been ahead in the way to come back and waited until all pilgrims who fell behind arrived and gathered. Then, a pulpit was set up by piling up the camel saddles so he could make his announcement and people could see him. The weather was very hot so, people were wrapping their robes around their feet and legs, and were sitting around the pulpit, on the hot rocks. Then the Prophet delivered a long sermon. He recited some verses from the Quran, and several times reminded and warned people of their deeds and future.<sup>1</sup>

In the end, when the Prophet made people prepared enough, took the hand of Imam Ali, raised it, and introduced him as the master of his Ummah (nation) after his demise.<sup>2</sup> The assembled multitude had not begun to disperse when the agent of revelation revealed this verse to the Prophet,

1. Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, by Tabarānī, vol. 5, p. 171.

2. Al-Sunan al-Kubrā, vol. pp. 409, 437, 442; Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqah, by Ahmad bin Muhammad Heythamī, vol. 2, p. 368.

﴿...الْيَوْمَ بَيَّنَّسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَمْتَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...﴾<sup>1</sup>

“...This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so, fear them not, but fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion...”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet left the place where he was standing, while all around the sound of *Takbīr* (Allah is the Great) was to be heard as the pilgrims expressed their warm and enthusiastic feelings towards Imam Ali. People came up to him in groups and congratulated him on his appointment as a leader, addressing him as their master and the master of every believer; man and woman.<sup>3</sup> On account of the venue of the deliverance of this sermon, it is known as *the sermon of Ghadīr*.

### The position of Imamate in the sermon of Ghadīr

The sermon of Ghadīr is one of the best documents for understanding the general plan of Islam to guide humankind, because after the event of Ghadīr and the perfection of the religion, the series of prophecy ended forever and the project of guiding humanity continued in a new form. This new format was the foundation of Imamate and successorship of the Prophet which, of course, had a

1. The Quran, 5:3.

2. Al-Durr al-Mansūr, by Suyūfī, vol. 2, p. 259.

3. Al- Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, vol. 11, p. 74.

history among previous prophets because many prophets had chosen a guardian for themselves to complete their unfinished path and goals in guiding people towards the right path.

However, in one of the verses of this long sermon, addressing people, the Prophet puts a particular stress on this crucial code that the perfection of religion is possible through the Imamate. The next point is that this path will continue until the Day of Judgment, and those who deviate from this path will be among the misguided,

﴿مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ، إِنَّمَا أَكْمَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ دِينَكُمْ بِإِمَامَتِهِ. فَسَنَ لَمْ يَأْتَمَّ بِهِ وَبِمَنْ يَقُومُ مَقَامَهُ مِنْ وُلْدِي مِنْ صُلْبِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالْعَرْضِ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ، لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَ لَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ﴾

“O the companies of mankind! Allah, the Exalted, the Glorified, has indeed perfected your religion through his Imamate (the leadership of Imam Ali). So, whoever does not take him and those who succeed him from amongst my offspring from his loins until the Day of Judgment and when people will be presented before Allah the Exalted, the Glorified as the Imams, indeed are the ones whose deeds have failed in this world and the Hereafter; and in the Fire they are eternal. And the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be granted any respite.”

At this point, the issue that we intend to explain is the great status of Mahdism in Ghadīr sermon. According to our previous claim, this sermon is a general and comprehensive plan of human guid-

ance until the Day of Judgment because the discourse of Mahdism and the Imamate of the last Imam (Imam Mahdi) is a key factor for the continuation of this divine invitation.

### The declaration of Imam Mahdi in the sermon of Ghadīr

Throughout the relatively long sermon of Ghadīr, the Prophet, in addition to emphasizing the importance of the high position of the Imamate, repeatedly mentions the name of Imam Mahdi and the actualization of his advent in the future and his dominion over the whole world and enumerates some of his attributes.

For instance, in a part of the sermon, the Prophet explicitly mentions Imam Mahdi as the *Qā'im*, (the Upriser) and introduces him as a person who will regain the lost divine rights and conquer the East and the West of the earth,

«مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ، التُّورِ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مَسْلُوكٌ فِيَّ ثُمَّ فِي عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، ثُمَّ فِي النَّسْلِ مِنْهُ إِلَى الْقَائِمِ الْمُهْدِيِّ الَّذِي يَأْخُذُ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ وَبِكُلِّ حَقٍّ هُوَلْنَا...»

“O the companies of mankind! The light from Allah, the Exalted, the Glorified, is entwined within me, and then within Ali bin Abī Tālib, then within his descendants until the Upriser al-Mahdi who will re-establish the rule of Allah, and any right that is ours...”

In another part, the Prophet clarifies that the divine promise of Imam’s absolute sovereignty over all parts of the earth before the day of Resurrection will be fulfilled by saying,

«مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ، إِنَّهُ مَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا وَاللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهَا بِتَكْذِيبِهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمُحْلِكُهَا الْإِمَامَ الْمُهْدِيَّ وَاللَّهُ مُصَدِّقٌ وَعْدَهُ»

“O the companies of mankind! Indeed, there shall be no a city except that Allah will destroy it – for its belying – before the Day of Resurrection, and He will give its governance to Imam Mahdi, and surely Allah fulfills His promise.”<sup>1</sup>

However, the Prophet does not suffice to mentioning only the name of his last successor so, in the third step, he says in detail about the characteristics of Imam Mahdi while introducing the Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali) as his successor and referring to the eleven Imams after Ali,

«... أَلَا إِنَّ خَاتَمَ الْأَيْمَةِ مِنَّا الْقَائِمَ الْمُهْدِيَّ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ الظَّاهِرُ عَلَى الدِّينِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ الْمُتَنَقِّمُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ فَاتِحُ الحُصُونِ وَهَادِمُهَا. أَلَا إِنَّهُ غَالِبُ كُلِّ قَبِيلَةٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّرْكِ وَهَادِيهَا. أَلَا إِنَّهُ الْمُنْذِرُ بِكُلِّ ثَارٍ لِأَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ النَّاصِرُ لِذِي اللَّهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ الْعَرَّافُ مِنْ بَحْرِ عَمِيقٍ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ يَسْمُ كُلِّ ذِي فَضْلٍ بِفَضْلِهِ وَكُلِّ ذِي جَهْلٍ بِجَهْلِهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ خَيْرُهُ اللَّهُ وَخَيْرُهُ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ وَارِثُ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ وَالمَحِيطُ بِكُلِّ فَهْمٍ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ المَحْبُورُ عَنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَالمُسَيِّدُ لِأَمْرِيَّاتِهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ الرَّشِيدُ السَّديدُ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ المَفْوُضُ إِلَيْهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ بَسَّرَ بِهِ مَنْ سَلَفَ مِنَ القُرُونِ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ البَاقِي حُجَّةً وَلا حُجَّةَ بَعْدَهُ وَلا حَقِّي إِلَّا مَعَهُ وَلا نُورًا إِلَّا عِنْدَهُ. أَلَا إِنَّهُ لا غَالِبَ لَهُ وَلا مَنْصُورَ عَلَيْهِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ وَلِيُّ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَحَكْمُهُ فِي خَلْقِهِ، وَآمِينُهُ فِي سِرِّهِ وَعَلَانِيَتِهِ.»

“O Indeed, the seal of the Imams from amongst us is the Upriser, al-Mahdi.

1. This is in reference to the Quranic verse 17:58.

*O Indeed, he is the one who prevails over the religion.<sup>1</sup>*  
*O Indeed, he is the avenger against the oppressors.*  
*O Indeed, he is the conqueror of the fortresses and their destroyer.*  
*O Indeed, he is the winner over all tribes of the polytheists and their guide [to the truth].*  
*O Indeed, he is the avenger of the blood of every one of Allah's devotees.*  
*O Indeed, he is the helper of Allah's religion.*  
*O Indeed, he is the scooper of the deep ocean [of knowledge].*  
*O Indeed, he will mark every owner of distinction by his distinction and every owner of ignorance by his ignorance.*  
*O Indeed, he is Allah's choice and His chosen one.*  
*O Indeed, he is the inheritor of all kinds of knowledge and encompasses every perception.*  
*O Indeed, he is the communicator on behalf of his Lord – Almighty and Majestic – and he gives rise to the teachings of His verses.*  
*O Indeed, he is the rightful guide, the one of strong infallible opinion who is not prone to errors and puts things to their right places.*  
*O Indeed, he is delegated to [by the Almighty].*  
*O Indeed, he is the one whom past generations have given glad tidings of.*  
*O Indeed, he is the remaining proof (Hujjah) and there shall be no Hujjah after him, and there is no right other than that is with him, and there is no light except that is with him.*  
*O Indeed, none can overcome him and there is no victor over him.*

1. This is about good tidings given in the holy Qur'an on several occasions, such as 9:33, 48:28, and 61:9.

*O Indeed, he is the authority of Allah on His earth, His arbitrator between His creation, and His trustee in His secret and His evident.”*

Then, in the last verses of this sermon, the Prophet expresses his divine mission in taking the covenant and allegiance from people on accepting the Imamate and leadership of Imam Ali and his successors, and then the Prophet names, in particular, Imam Mahdi as the last Imam by saying,

«...فَأْمُرْتُ أَنْ أَخَذَ الْبَيْعَةَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّفَقَةَ لَكُمْ بِقَبُولِ مَا جِئْتُ بِهِ عَنِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي عَلِيٍّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْأَوْصِيَاءِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنِّي وَمِنْهُ إِمَامَةٌ فِيهِمْ قَائِمَةٌ، خَاتِمُهَا الْمُهْدَى إِلَى يَوْمٍ يَلْقَى اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُعَدِّرُ وَيَقْضِي.»

“...I am commanded [by the Almighty] to take the oath of allegiance from you and to make a covenant with you that you assent to what I have brought from Allah, Almighty and Majestic, about Ali the Commander of the Faithful and the successors after him, those who are from me and him, which is the Imamate (divine leadership) that is upheld and established in them; the seal of which is Mahdi until the day he stands before Allah Who determines and decreases.”



The Special Deputies of Imam Mahdi  
and the Biography of

## 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd al-'Amrī

### Introduction

The Prophet and the Shiite Imams, many years before the birth of the last Imam who is Imam Mahdi, had predicted and emphasized the issue of his occultation and the certainty of its occurrence.<sup>1</sup> Fearing that the disappearance of the last Imam would cause very detrimental effects on Muslims' faith especially the Shias, all of the infallible leaders' efforts were aimed at strengthening the foundations of the people's faith through preparing them step by step such as: making people aware of the last Imam and his occultation, establishing the *network of agents* from the era of Imam Sādiq (the sixth Imam), and reduction of direct contact with Shiites especially

1. See: Al-Kāfi, by Kulaynī, vol. 1, p. 336.



The inception of Imam Mahdi's occultation is considered as a new chapter of the relation between the Imam and 'Ummah (his nation). The Shi'a community which for years was accustomed to the direct relation with the Imams now was to adjust itself with the new state of affairs.

from the period of the Imamate of the tenth Imam (Imam Hādī). These acts made the Shiites familiar with the issue of *Occultation* and its necessity so that people would not go astray.

On this basis, Islamic sources contain many Hadiths reported from the Prophet and the Imams on the happening of the occultation and its relating issues especially dividing into two parts: *Minor occultation* and *Major occultation*.<sup>1</sup> On this matter, Sheikh Tūsī narrates, "...Frequent and widespread reports have been received from Imam Mahdi's fathers long before (the happening of) occultation about his Imamate. Reports confirming that there will be an occultation for the Master of this affair (Sāhib al-'Amr) and addressing what will happen, indicating that there will be two kinds of

1. See: Al-Ghaybah, by Nu'mānī, p. 175.

*occultation for him, one of which will be longer than the other....*"<sup>1</sup>

As the status of the Imamate is a divinely appointed position and the earth does never remain without the Imam ever for a fraction of a second, Imam Mahdi took over the mantle of leadership and Imamate after the martyrdom of his father (Imam Hassan al-'Askarī) on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Rabī' al-Awwal, 260 A.H (the 5<sup>th</sup> January 874 A.D).<sup>2</sup>

Immediately after the eleventh Imam's martyrdom, the soldiers of the Abbasid Caliph surrounded his house. They were in search of his son who offered the funeral prayer of the dead on his father's body. Hence, Imam Mahdi was forced to conceal himself from the eyes of the people. Due to those historical incidents in which are a proof of the danger to the life of Imam Mahdi,<sup>3</sup> the occultation was thus necessary for the protection of the Imam's life and the continuity of the institution of Imamate as the successorship of the prophethood. Hence, from that time, the Minor occultation began and continued until 329 A.H. (about seventy years).

The inception of Imam Mahdi's occultation is considered as a new chapter of the relation between the Imam and 'Ummah (his nation). The Shi'a community which for years was accustomed to the direct relation with the Imams now was to adjust itself with the new state of affairs. For this reason, the Shi'a names it *the Minor occultation* during which people were in contact with the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam through his appointed deputies. They were a few special and

1. Kitāb al-Ghaybah, by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 101.

2. Al-Kāfī, vol. 1, p. 341; Al-Ghaybah, by Nu'mānī, p. 149; Kitāb al-Ghaybah, p. 159.

3. Al-'Irshād, by Muhammad bin Nu'mān al-Baghdādī (Sheikh al-Mufīd), vol. 2, p. 475.

selected people among the Shias who had the permission to meet Imam Mahdi whenever the need arose. They presented the problems of the Shias in the service of the Imam who provided answers to them and conveyed them back to the people. Such selected people were called as *the Special Representatives, the special deputies, and the doors of Imam Mahdi*. They called *Special* because the infallible Imam appointed certain individuals as his deputies. To explain it, the first one of Imam Mahdi's special representative 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.

On the contrary, *General Deputies* of Imam Mahdi become determinable through conformity with some qualifications at the time of Major occultation (the period from 329 A.H. up to this date and up until the appearance of Imam Mahdi).

In other words, those scholars who are executing their tasks as deputies of the Imam in this era, particularly those highly learned jurists, are known as general deputies of the Imam, thereby whosoever claims being a special deputy of Imam Mahdi in the period of Major occultation is a liar for sure.

### The significant role of the special deputies

- The special representatives of Imam Mahdi, in the minor occultation, prepared the people mentally for the major occultation. Had Imam directly gone into occultation, people would have denied his existence and would have deviated so, at the same time, the special deputies had to safeguard people from any negligence towards the matter of Occultation.

- The special deputies of Imam Mahdi were responsible for proving the existence of the Imam among the reliable Shias to prevent any doubt from creeping in their beliefs. In some instances, they even arranged meetings or indicated a place for meeting the Imam to reliable people to disperse the cloud of uncertainty. Thanks to them, the Shias were saved from disintegration and deviation like the era of the first deputy that was marked with the presence of many groups having variant views about the son of Imam Hasan al-‘Askarī. Also, they resist false impostors who claimed to be the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam or an intermediary between the common populace and the Imam.
- They were the channels for presenting the religious and legal problems of the Shias before Imam Mahdi and conveying Imam’s replies to people. One can find many questions and their replies during the time of the second representative.
- The special representatives collected Khums (contribution of twenty percent of income paid by Shia) and other religious alms from the Shias by their local representatives. It was then presented to the Imam and expended according to Imam’s instructions. The practice of appointing local representatives was prevalent since the time of the previous Imams as *the network of agents*.

However, the special deputies who under the guidance of Imam Mahdi overcame the difficulties saved the Shi‘as from confusion and disunity and kept them in the clear path of truth. They were among the most pious, clever, and shrewd people of their time; and

due to earning Allah’s satisfaction, they rose to the high rank of deputyship. They in chronological order are as follows:

‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd al-‘Amrī (d. 266 A.H. / 880 A.D.);

Muhammad bin ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd al-‘Amrī (d. 305 A.H. / 917 A.D.);

Abu al-Qāsim al-Husayn bin Rūh al-Nawbakhtī (d. 326 A.H. / 938 A.D.);

Abu al-Hassan Ali bin Muhammad al-Samurī (d. 329 A.H. / 941 A.D.).

### ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd al-‘Amrī (d. 266 A.H. /880 A.D.) Biography

‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd was the first of Four Special Deputies of Imam Mahdi at the era of Minor occultation. Though there is no certain document of his birthday and birthplace, according to some historic evidence, he must have been born between the years of 195 to 200 A.H., whose age is estimated at 266 A.H. (the year of his death), between sixty-six and seventy-one. His cognomens are *Abū ‘Amr* (because of his ancestral links) and *Abu Muhammad* (literally meaning: the father of Muhammad, because of his only son Muhammad, the second special representative).<sup>1</sup>

Also, he was called by some titles such as: *‘Amrī* (because of his ancestor who was called *‘Amr*); *Asadī* (because he was from Asad tribe)<sup>2</sup>; *‘Askarī* (the word *‘Askar*, in Arabic, means *garrison*; that is because he lived in Samarra, a town in Iraq where a big garrison

1. I‘lām al-Warā bi A‘lām al-Hudā, by Tabarsī, p. 444.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 344.

had been built therein.); *Sammān* that in Arabic refers to a person who transacts oil.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to know that since he was appointed by Imam ‘Askarī (the eleventh Imam) to collect the money (Khums, Zakāh, and religious alms) from Shias, sometimes, fearing of the Abbasid caliphs, he would conceal all money and put in his oil barrels and in this way, he could safely deliver everything to Imam ‘Askarī.<sup>2</sup>

### The deputyship of three last infallible Imams

Uthmān b. Sa‘īd was the dependable deputy and agent of both, Imam Hādī (the tenth Imam) and his son, Imam Askarī. Then, he was chosen by Imam ‘Askarī as the deputy of his son, Imam Mahdi, at the presence of forty individuals of Shia.<sup>3</sup> Even, it has been said that Uthmān b. Sa‘īd, at the tender age of 11, had been the servant or porter of Imam Jawād (the ninth Imam).<sup>4</sup> The renowned Shiite scholar, Sheikh al-Tūsī records in his illustrious book, *al-Ghaybah* that Imam Hādī and Imam ‘Askari have spoken highly of ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd and he was their most trusted companion. He commenced serving Imam Hadī and, after the Imam’s martyrdom, he was one of the closest companions of Imam ‘Askari as his representative. Before his martyrdom, Imam ‘Askari has appointed ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd as the first special deputy of Imam Mahdi, in the presence of forty Shias. Then, in the last illness of the life of Imam Hassan al-‘Askarī, Uthman b. Sa‘īd took care of the Imam, and also after the

1. Rijāl, by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 389.

2. Kitāb al-Ghaybah, by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 354.

3. Kitāb al-Ghaybah, p. 357.

4. Manāqib Āl-e Abī Tālib, by Ibn-e Shahrāshūb, vol.4, p. 380.

Imam’s martyrdom, he was commissioned by the Imam himself to perform the funeral major ablution of the Imam and to enshroud and bury him.<sup>1</sup> While mentioning about Imam Mahdi, Sheikh Tūsī says, “He (‘Uthman b. Sa‘id) was an oil trader famous as Abu ‘Amr. He was an esteemed and reliable companion in the eyes of Imam, and was also the Imam’s special deputy.” The statement of the Shaikh makes it clear that ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd was the deputy of three Imams.

### The reason for social acceptability of being the deputy of Imam Mahdi

After the martyrdom of Imam ‘Askari, ‘Uthman b. Sa‘id moved from Samarra to Bagdad and stayed there till his death and ran the office of deputyship there. This migration was done by the order of Imam Mahdi due to the hardships caused by the government officials of Abbasid caliphs in Samarra and the presence of many enemies there. Although Samarra was the capital, due to the presence of Abbasid dynasties who were always opposed to the Imams, ‘Uthman b. Sa‘id had to lead the organization of advocacy out of their sight. However, he went to Bagdad and organized the Shias’ affairs in the city of Karkh.

Like his routine in the time of two previous Imams, Imam Hādī and Imam ‘Askari, ‘Uthman b. Sa‘id delivered the letters and religious taxes of the Shias for the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam. His occupation of the leadership of the organization during the time of the tenth and the eleventh Imams encouraged the agents and Shiite figures to accept

1. Kitāb al-Ghaybah, p. 356.



his claim and follow his instructions, without asking him to show a miracle or proof.<sup>1</sup> He as the Imam's "right hand", enjoyed his entire confidence and was entrusted with the execution of all his commissions when he was watched carefully and suspiciously by the tyrant government of the day so that he even avoided speaking with the individual members of the community. For this reason, Imam Hādī presented 'Uthmān b. Sa'id to those who found it difficult to consult him directly saying,

«...هَذَا أَبُو عَمْرٍو النَّقَّةُ الْأَمِينُ مَا قَالَهُ لَكُمْ فَعَنِّي يَقُولُهُ وَمَا آدَاهُ إِلَيْكُمْ فَعَنِّي يُؤَدِّيهِ.»<sup>2</sup>  
 '...This man Abū Amr ('Uthmān b. Sa'id) is a reliable and trustworthy person. Whatever he relates to you is from my side and whatever he gives to you is from me.'"

Also, after the martyrdom of the tenth Imam, 'Uthmān b. Sa'id continued to hold this position of trust under the eleventh Imam who appointed him using the same words as had his father saying,

«هَذَا أَبُو عَمْرٍو النَّقَّةُ الْأَمِينُ ثِقَّةُ الْمَاضِي وَتَقْتِي فِي الْحَيَاةِ وَالْمَمَاتِ فَمَا قَالَهُ لَكُمْ فَعَنِّي يَقُولُهُ وَمَا آدَى إِلَيْكُمْ فَعَنِّي يُؤَدِّيهِ.»<sup>3</sup>  
 "This man, Abu 'Amr, is a reliable and trustworthy person. He was dependable for the previous Imam and is dependable and reliable for me in my lifetime and even after my death. Whatever he conveys to you is from my side and everything he gives to you is from me."

1. Al-Kaḥfī, vol. 1, p. 329.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 34.

3. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 344.

Furthermore, during the last ten years of the time of Imam Hādī, the leadership of an underground organization as the network of agents (*al-Wukalā*) was in 'Uthman's hands. He organized its internal affairs and systematized the relations between the center of the organization and its branches in the remote provinces in the sense that all the revenue sent by the adherents to the Imam through his agents was given in the end to 'Uthmān b. Sa'id who in turn handed it over to the Imam. It clearly shows the level of Imam's trust and confidence in him. Moreover, it underlines another important fact that he performed some critical duties i.e. to convey Imam's messages and commands to Shias. The duty of Shias was to accept this communication and to implement it.

For instance, when, after the demise of Imam 'Askarī, Ja'far, the brother of Imam 'Askarī, falsely claimed to be the next Imam, Ahmad bin Ishāq the companions of Imam Hassan al-'Askarī informed 'Uthmān b. Sa'id about it and asked him to clarify the truth or falsity of Ja'far's claim. 'Uthmān b. Sa'id sent the letter to Imam Mahdi. In the reply letter, the Imam rejected the Imamate of Ja'far and called him a corruptor and a prayer breaker.<sup>1</sup>

### His demise

As it is mentioned, 'Uthmān b. Sa'id went to Baghdad from Samarra by the order of Imam Mahdi. The reason was that the government's vigilance. Samarra was the capital of the Abbasid government. At that time Mu'tamid, the Abbasid caliph was appointed as ruler in there. Till the end of his rule, Samarra remained the capital

1. Al-Ihtijāj, by Tabarsī, vol. 2, p. 468.

and then, the capital was shifted to Baghdad. Till that time Baghdad was the Shiite center. The migration to Baghdad and settling in the district of Karkh where the Shias lived helped ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd to keep in touch with the Shias residing in different places. In this way, his activities spread to different areas and were not restricted only to Baghdad. If he was in Samarra or if Baghdad was the capital of Abbasids, then this would have been very difficult. However, the duration of his deputyship and the exact date of his demise has not got wide coverage in books of history and traditions, but most of the historians believe that he was the representative of Imam Mahdi for six or seven years. Allāmah Bahr al-‘Ulūm has recorded that ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd deputyship expired by his death before 267 A.H.

After the death of ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd, his son (Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān) performed the funeral proceeding and buried him in Bagdad inside Maydān street (Sūq al-Maydān) in al-Darb mosque.<sup>1</sup> In this regard, Sheikh Tūsī says, “*I saw his tomb where Abū Nasr Hibat-Allah b. Mahmūd mentioned. A building that included the Mihrāb of a mosque (niche of prayers where the Imam of the prayer stands) has been constructed on it. We went there and paid a visit to his grave easily. From 408 A.H., when I came to Bagdad, to 430 A.H., it was in this condition. However, Abū Mansūr Muhammad b. Faraj destroyed the building, made the grave exposed, and put a box on it. Then, there was a roof over the grave, and everybody could enter the structure and visit it. All people in the neighborhood who were all Sunni tried to be blessed by visiting*

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 347.

*his grave, saying, ‘He was a righteous man.’ Sometimes, they say, ‘He was a descendant of Imam Husayn’s wet nurse,’ but they do not know the truth. The grave has been in the same condition up to now; that is, 447 A.H.”*<sup>1</sup> This shows that the extent to which his deputyship was concealed that even after a passage of two hundred years, it was difficult for the people to recognize him. Nowadays, his tomb is located in the district of Rassāfah in the east of Bagdad; the area that is known as “Shūrjah Market”.

After the demise of ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd, Imam Mahdi wrote a condolence letter to his son, Muhammad as following:

«إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ تَسْلِيمًا لِأَمْرِهِ وَرَضَى بِقَضَائِهِ عَاشَ أَبُوكَ سَعِيدًا وَمَاتَ حَمِيدًا فَرَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ وَالْحَقُّهٗ بِأَوْلِيَانِهِ وَمَوَالِيهِ فَلَمْ يَزَلْ مُجْتَهِدًا فِي أَمْرِهِمْ سَاعِيًا فِيمَا يُقْرَبُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَإِلَيْهِمْ نَضَّرَ اللَّهُ وَجْهَهُ وَأَقَالَهُ عَثْرَتَهُ.»<sup>2</sup>

“*Surely we are from Allah and we will return to Him. We submit ourselves to His command and are satisfied with what He determines for us. Your father devoted his entire life to goodness and died while he was praiseworthy. May Allah have mercy on him and include him with his friends and the Imams. He continuously endeavored and struggled in the affairs of his Imams in a way that made him closer to Allah the Exalted, the Glorified, and closer to his Imams. May Allah make His face contented and happy and forgive him for his mistakes.”*

1. Kitāb al-Ghaybah, p. 358.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 349.

### Miraculous deeds of ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd

Great divine men, due to self-purification and refinement of their souls, achieve some marks of honor which they show to some people in order to guide them or deliver an ultimatum to them. Miraculous deeds and veracious evidence were told to Shias in some cases by Imam Mahdi directly and in other cases by the deputies of his majesty, so that the Shias, in addition to believing in the existence of Imam Mahdi would trust in deputyship of the four deputies of the Imam. This is why we see some miraculous deeds and veracious evidence that took place in the time of ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd since in this era the Shias were yet astonished and even did



not know that Imam Mahdi exists. Here, some of the miraculous deeds are mentioned:

1- Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Mahzīyār said, “*After the demise of Imam Hasan al-‘Askari I doubted about his successor. My father was Imam Hasan’s agent and a considerable amount of money was with him. So, he asked me to accompany him to deliver it to Imam Hasan’s successor. We set out together, but in the middle of the journey, my father got sick. He made his will and said to me: ‘be wary of Allah and deliver the money to its owner. Whoever tells you the signs of this fund, hand it over to him.’ Then he passed away. I stayed in Iraq for some days and after a while, I received a letter from ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd. Surprisingly, all the signs about that wealth of which nobody was aware except me and my father were mentioned in that letter.*”

Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Mahzīyār, based on this miraculous deed, believed in the Imamate of Imam Mahdi as well as the deputyship of ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd.<sup>1</sup>

2- Muhammad bin Ali al-Aswad said, “*At the beginning of Minor occultation, an old lady gave me a piece of cloth to deliver it to Imam Mahdi. I took that along with lots of other cloths. When I arrived in Baghdad, I went to ‘Uthmān bin Sa‘īd. He said, ‘hand all of these properties over to Muhammad bin Abbas al-Qumī.’ I gave all of them*

1. Rijāl, by Kashshī, p. 531.

*except for the old lady's cloth. Then, 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd sent me a message from the Imam saying, 'Deliver the old lady's cloth to him, as well.'*"<sup>1</sup>

- 3- Muhammad bin Ali bin Shāzān stated, "*Some money was handed to me to deliver to Imam Mahdi, which was 20 dirhams less than 500 dirhams. I added 20 dirhams to it and sent it along with a letter to 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd. I mentioned nothing about the money in my letter. However, he wrote to me in reply, 'I received 500 dirhams, 20 dirhams of which was yours.'*"<sup>2</sup>

### Scientific works of 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd

There is no book or writing attributed to 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd, according to researches and investigations. It raises the question that why the four deputies have no writings, but some others like Kulaynī have books! To answer this question, some points should be considered:

1. Deputyship for special people does not mean that they should be the best in all cases; rather they should have some necessary merits for undertaking the responsibility of their deputyship, such as trustworthiness and reliability. Therefore, some other people might be better than Imam's deputy in some fields such as knowledge and writing. As

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 335.

2. Al-Kāfī, vol. 1, p. 523.

a result, descriptions, which Imams gave about their deputies, are usually about their honesty and reliance. For example:

Abu Sahl al-Nubakhtī, one of the great theologians of Baghdad and a great and learned member of the Nubakht clan had written and compiled lots of books. Once he was asked, "Why Husayn bin Rūh (the third special deputy of Imam Mahdi) was honored by deputyship, and you with this state of knowledge and merits do not receive that post?" He answered, "*They [the Imams] are wiser and fully aware of everything; and whoever they choose [would be more suitable and meritorious]. Now, I am a person who has contact and argument with Islam's enemies. If I were His majesty's deputy and were aware of his place (as Husayn b. Rūh is aware of his place) while got stuck in hardship arguing with opponents of the Imam; I might not have controlled myself and would have revealed the Imam's place. While, Abu al Qāsim (Husayn b. Rūh) is so self-controlled that if the Imam were hidden under his clothes and people tortured him to death, he would not take away his clothes and would not show the Imam to the enemies.*"<sup>1</sup>

2. As it was mentioned, 'Uthmān bin Sa'īd used to sell oil to make a living, and at the same time, he had the great and important duty of deputyship of the Imam of the Age, which was a time-consuming task. Apparently, this task occupied all his time and he did not have enough time to write a book.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 359.



In the meantime, the enemies through misrepresentation of the facts, have tried to change the picture of this vital belief; and to divert, falsify and tarnish the image of Imam Mahdi and his worldwide mission.



# Question and Answer

## Will Imam Mahdi be a violent Upriser?

### A brief answer

In response to this question briefly, there are three different views on the way of Imam Mahdi's behavior towards his opponents at the time of his appearance:

- The first view, which is the conception of the extremists; and those who are the enemies of Islamic savior propound it as their viewpoint, and unfortunately even some Muslims have believed it, is that Imam Mahdi will appear in the shape of a bloodthirsty ruler and will kill a large number of his opponents.

- Contrary to the previous viewpoint, some people have adopted the opposite extreme and unreasonable theory and believe that when the Imam appears, there would never occur any war with the opponents, and there would be no bloodshed at all or just so little that is not considerable.
- And according to the third view, the conduct of Imam Mahdi will be the same as the manner of the prophet Muhammad. So, he firstly will enlighten and guide the opponents; then he will fight with the adamant enemies who are strict obstacles on the path of his divine mission i.e. the elimination of tyranny and the establishment of a divine government throughout the world.



### A detailed answer

The issue of Messianism is a common belief among all religions so that, the believers wait for a savior to come and fill the entire world with justice and equity. In Islam, the auspicious advent of a divine man by the name of *Mahdi* and from the progeny of the prophet Muhammad is shared by all Muslims so that there are lots of narrations from the Prophet in both Shia and Sunni sources in this regard. For instance, there is a Hadith upon whose authenticity everyone agrees from the prophet to have said,

«لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ وَنْدِي  
فَيَمْلَأُ الْأَرْضَ عَدْلًا وَقِسْطًا كَمَا مَلَأَتْ ظُلْمًا وَجَوْرًا»<sup>1</sup>

*“If only one day remains from the age of the world, the Almighty Allah will send a man from my progeny to fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with oppression and injustice.”*

In the meantime, the enemies through misrepresentation of the facts, have tried to change the picture of this vital belief; and to divert, falsify and tarnish the image of Imam Mahdi and his worldwide mission. Unfortunately, according to the mentality of even some Muslims, after the advent of Mahdi, he will establish his government and gain power by relying on the sword and killing his opponents. In fact, this fallacious perception and mentality is rooted in a few defective narrations in which have serious problems in terms of the validity of the chain of transmitters and text quoted in some books of tradition.

Of course, it must be under consideration the fact that according to

1. Sunan, by Abī Dāwūd, vol. 2, Kitāb al-Mahdi; Kitāb al-Ghaybah, by Sheikh al-Tūsī, vol. 1, p. 425.

some authentic narrations, before the appearance of Imam Mahdi, especially on the threshold of his advent, wars and killings and calamities will befall human beings, but we should not, by mistake, attribute these wars and killings to Imam Mahdi because these events will take place before the time of his emergence, or at the very beginning of his advent and therefore he is not responsible for that. In contrast with the extremist view mentioned above, there is an opposite extreme misconception in which its adherents believe that the Imam, after his appearance, will subdue all creatures through divine power miraculously and supernaturally; hence, the death toll will be very few, and there will just a little bloodshed that is considered as being usual.

According to the third view, there are many authentic Hadiths explicitly declaring the method of Imam Mahdi’s governance in common with the method of the prophet Muhammad. Confirming this assertion, there is a narration from the Prophet to have said,

«يَخْرُجُ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي وَيَعْمَلُ بِسُنَّتِي»<sup>1</sup>  
*“A man from among my progeny will rise and act according to the path of mine.”*

To explain the conduct of the Prophet, the Holy Quran calls him as the Prophet of mercy where Allah says,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾<sup>2</sup>  
*“And We sent you [O the Prophet!] not as a mercy unto the worlds.”*

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 82.

2. The Quran, 21:107.

Undoubtedly, the personal character and behavior of the Prophet contributed greatly to the progress of Islam. He was known to be an honest, trustworthy, and pious person from childhood. During his prophethood, he always lived by these principles and values. He exemplified in his life the Quranic command,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا إِعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ...﴾<sup>1</sup>

“O you who believe! Be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably; act equitably, that is nearer to piety...”

Before battles, the Prophet always used to give instructions to his soldiers not to harm women, children, the elderly, and those who surrendered, not to destroy farms and gardens, not to chase those who have escaped from the war front, and to be kind to their captives. In the same manner, Imam Mahdi will apply the same practice to the disbelievers, and it is clear that if he treats non-Muslims with kindness and mercy, he will be more essentially, kinder to Muslims. In other words, when the Prophet, according to the text of the Holy Quran is “*the mercy for the worlds*”, how his last caliph can be an inhumane and disgrace to the world instead of mercy while he will be going to act just according to the ethical conducts of his noble ancestor!

In fact, Imam Mahdi will arise to establish justice as a natural and innate desire of human beings; therefore, the Imam cannot act in such a way that people wish they did not see him or, because of

1. The Quran, 5:8.

the cruelty he commits, to say that he is not from the progeny of Muhammad and does not resemble the promised savior!

### The reason behind the battles of Imam Mahdi with the enemies

According to Islamic narrations, during the emergence of Imam Mahdi, he will confront various groups and sects as non-believers in him; however, he will adopt different methods against each group of his opponents because all of these disbelievers would not be the same. Of course, a majority of the disbelievers are the ordinary people who do not know the Imam and the magnificent rank of the Imamate so, at the beginning of his advent, the Imam will introduce himself to them and will try to convince them and guide them to the right path. But a few of them are such strict enemies that they will stand against the Imam in a way that they would be considered as the serious obstacles in the path of his divine mission; like tyrant rulers, the heads of false and deviant sects, and hypocrites, etc.

Besides, it should be noted that some sects or groups of people would not accept the Imam as a divine leader, but they also would not stand against the Imam and would not be rendered as an impediment on the way of his mission. As it is clear, the Imam will not move against them.

In this situation and on the threshold of establishing his government, it would necessary for the Imam to fight with those obstacles to uproot them. However, the method and diplomacy of Imam Mahdi in this regard generally is only the continuation of the conduct of his ancestor, Prophet Muhammad. In better words, though

Imam Mahdi is the full embodiment of Divine mercy, his mode of conduct with the enemies and disbelievers depends on their reaction against him. In other words, Imam Mahdi, as the last savior for mankind, will not remain silent on any kind of tyranny at all. Undoubtedly, bloodthirsty oppressors rule the world before and while the advent of the Mahdi. Now, in such a case, how could be possible for the Imam, who has risen against all this perversion and tyranny to remain silent? Clearly the opposition groups who have usurped the rights of people and whose positions have been endangered and whose hands are stained with the blood of human beings are standing up to the reformist Imam's movement. Therefore, Imam Mahdi as the universal reformer who rises and has a mission to form 'the one-world government' must have a plan to remove the obstacles. Therefore, he will have to fight against the strict enemies of Islam to implement the divine justice hardly because in front of him, are the enemies armed to the teeth, with having access to the world's vast economic potential and have benefited from the advanced technology and by enjoying powerful armies who will raise the flag of opposition.

### Summing up and conclusion

A large number of narrations about the wars and the killings at the End of Time are related to the era before the appearance of Imam Mahdi which should not be ascribed to the Imam and the period of his ruling. As for those narrations dedicated to the time of the advent of Imam Mahdi and depict his uprising violently and murderously, they bear a serious problem in terms of the authenticity in their narrators and their texts. These problems occurred in these

narrations due to the prominent role of the exaggerators, forgers of narrations, and the carelessness of the weak narrators. Also, some narrations going to the opposite extreme deny the possibility of any war and bloodshed at that time. These narrations are also unacceptable due to lacking the required criteria in their chain of transmitters. Add to it, the occurrence of a battle is one of the natural prerequisites in a universal revolutionary movement.

However, based on the authentic Hadiths, the way of Imam Mahdi's military confrontation with enemies will be the same as that of his noble ancestor, Prophet Muhammad. Basically he will come to establish justice which is the natural desire and heartfelt wish of human beings; therefore, the Savior cannot behave in such a way that people wish they did not see him. Literally such a person cannot be harsh, ruthless, callous, cruel, and unfair on people. As opposed to this image of the Imam, Islamic narrations depict the infallible Imam as an excellent embodiment of divine grace and mercy. For instance, there is a tradition from Imam Ridā (the eighth imam of Shia) saying,

«...الإمام الأنيس الرفيق والوالد الشفيق والأخ الشقيق والأمم البرّة بالولد الصّغير ومفرّج العباد في الداهية التّاد.»<sup>1</sup>

*“Imam is a close friend, a kind father, a brother of the same blood and a beneficent mother to her baby, and a refuge for people in difficult conditions.”*

However, the truth is that Imam Mahdi will emerge at a time when human beings are swamped with tyrannical regimes and counter-

1. Usūl al-Kāfi, vol. 1, p. 200.



feit schools of thought claiming the salvation of humanity. In general, the excess of pervasive corruptions, immorality, oppressions, all kinds of social calamities, crisis, and various social unrests, etc. lay the groundwork for public acceptability of seeking justice so that, when the Imam appears with divine permission, downtrodden people bring themselves to the Imam, and the number of his companions increases from moment to moment, so that in less than a year, with the help of people themselves, the rule of universal justice will be established throughout the earth, and all kind of oppression and tyranny will vanish and humanity will achieve its common and perpetual dream for a worldwide Justice, security, and comfort. Of course, this will not be easy to occur because those who see their illegal benefits endangered will oppose the reformist Imam's movement. In such a case, Imam Mahdi like all the saints of Allah, firstly will call them to the right path variously and warns them not to break out war. Regarding this, there is a Hadith from Imam Sādiq (the sixth Imam of Shia) to have said,

«...يَدْعُوهُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ فَيَطِيعُونَهُ...»<sup>1</sup>

*"...Mahdi invites them to accept the truth with wisdom and fair admonition, then many of them obey him..."*

However, there will be some obstinate opponents who insist on their stubbornness and oppressive position. Therefore, the Imam will have to resort to a coercive manner to put them in subjection.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 53, p. 11.



## How can we create a strong love for Imam Mahdi in our hearts?

Some of those who have perfect knowledge about Imam Mahdi know that loving the Imam is the best way to get connected to Allah. Imam Mahdi is the best embodiment of the attributes of Allah and loving him means to love those attributes and to get qualified by them.

As a result, some of those who want to get closer to Allah feel strongly that loving the Imam is the gateway to get spiritually nearer to Allah. They look for a kind of strong love that if they do not reach their beloved ones the life becomes bitter for them. They know that some people have this kind of love towards their Imam in their hearts naturally without listening to the speeches of Islam-

ic preachers or hearing stories about those who have visited the Imam. Is there a way for us to create a real extreme love towards the Imam in ourselves; a burning love in our heart not a putative or temporary one?

The answer is that some kinds of love and affection are inherent and are out of man's control, like the parents' affection for their children. Parents are never forced to love their children. That is why it is not recommended to say, "O the parents! Please love your children." Instead, the Quran has emphasized and recommended children to respect their parents and to be kind to them.<sup>1</sup> That is because parents love their children regardless of their children like them or not. Parents deeply believe that their children are a part of their hearts.

Another kind of affection is not natural, rather it is created in hearts step by step by the passage of the time or it is made due to relationships with others or getting familiar with somebody after a while. This is like the love that exists within the friends in society.

By knowing these two kinds of love, we need to comprehend that the affection of the Prophet and his household especially the Imam of the Age towards us is inherent. We, the Shiites, are a part of our Imams' hearts as we read in a narration from Imam Sādiq (the Shia's sixth Imam) to have said,

«شِيعَتُنَا جُزْءٌ مِنَّا خُلِقُوا مِن فَضْلِ طَيْبَتِنَا»<sup>2</sup>

*"The Shiites are part of us; they are created from the store of our nature."*

1. The Quran, 17:23-24.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 65, p. 24.

"Therefore, the defect and fault is on our side that has led us to lose the real affection of our spiritual fathers especially our Imam of the Age who has said about us,

«إِنَّا غَيْرُ مُهْمِلِينَ لِإِرَاعَاتِكُمْ وَلَا نَاسِينَ لِذِكْرِكُمْ»<sup>1</sup>

*"Surely, we do not neglect your conditions nor are we forgetful of your remembrance."*

When a small child is separated from his parents his/her parents will never forget the child even until the end of their lifetime. But the child will forget his/her parents just after a while. The same thing has happened to many of us in our relationship with the Imam. Unfortunately, getting involved in our worldly affairs has resulted to the detriment of our affection and fondness towards Imam Mahdi. Maybe days pass and we do not think about the Imam at all as if there is no more love left in our hearts for him. Admittedly, the kindness of Imam Mahdi towards us has not reduced, rather we have become ignorant. He is always close to us even if we are far from him.

The fact is that great love and affection towards Imam Mahdi is not given to a man up until an intensive need for the Imam of the Age becomes created in his heart.

As it is clear, love is a term that is mostly referred to as an intense affection in ancient literature and such an affection usually has more to do with spiritual and mystical aspects than earthly and material ones. Because the material and earthly desires do not reach such a peak or even if it goes high, it would descend very quickly.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 53, p. 175.

Therefore, it is proper that we also do not use this term except for its right meaning. We should avoid using this term even in general emotional relationships. But if an affection increases insomuch within someone that the lover feels he would even sacrifice himself for the beloved one, [as the companions of Imam Husayn did it to the Imam] then this would be the criterion that the love of the lover is real. So, one of the best usages of the sacred word “love” is for an intense affection that the lover feels towards the beloved one.

The truth is that if we have cognizance about the real stance of our Imam in the world and in our life, we cannot suffice ourselves with a little interest in him.

The second truth is that, whoever wants to have a cordial and emotional connection with the Imam, gradually, he will feel more and more passion for him.

Basically, and naturally, we need someone to love with all of our hearts to warm our lives by this love. This very intense love cannot belong to anyone but to the Imam of the Age. When we believe that the Imam is the caliph of Allah on the earth, it means that as we love Allah more than anyone and anything else, we have to love the Imam like this. Consequently, if our affection for Imam Mahdi is not strong enough, it shows that we have a problem in our hearts. There is a story that describes the matter well. Once, one of the people who fell in love with Imam Mahdi went to one of the Islamic scholars and asked him to show him a way to see the Imam of the Age at least in his dream. The scholar man issued an order that he should refrain from drinking water for three consecutive days and nights and then come to visit him. The man did the same and went to the master after three days. The master asked him what he

dreamed during those three nights. He said that on the first night while he was a little thirsty, he did not dream anything specifically, but on the third night, he only dreamed that there was a lot of water and he drank that water continuously but it did not slake his thirst. The master replied, “*Since you felt the thirst with the entire being you only dreamed of water. Whenever you felt the same passion for the Imam of the Age you will at least see him in your dream.*”

Of course, it is clear that this intense affection and love for the Imam of the Age will not be suddenly created in our hearts. The first step in feeling that love and affection for the Imam is that our actions and thoughts must be in congruence with him. No doubt that if our spirit, mind, and actions do not be in line with our Imam how can we expect to have a permanent love towards him in our hearts. The mentioned congruity is the first and most important factor for reaching to Imam Mahdi. If two things want to be connected and correlated with each other, the only way is that there should exist a congruity and compatibility between each one to another.

Since Imam Mahdi is the divinely chosen servant of Allah and an infallible Imam; therefore, the first way of making a congruity with the Imam depends on trying to observe the utmost level of piety. It means that all of the obligatory duties must be done precisely by the lover of the Imam. For example, not lonely one must say the prayers at the beginning of their times, but also during his prayers all of his thoughts and concentration must be on what he says and on its meaning. He also must preserve his careful attention to Allah while he prays. On the other hand, one must try to refrain from all kinds of forbidden acts completely. In addition, he should not think

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about sins even in his heart. By doing so, gradually it becomes a habit for him.

Furthermore, man in order to reinforce this love and affection towards Imam Mahdi, his knowledge and cognition about the Imam must be increased. This goal can be gained by reading the competent books written by skilful scholars about this subject; especially by reading the narrations related to Imam Mahdi (such as the section of narrations related to the chapter al-Hujjat in Usūl al-Kāfi). This knowledge will become like a bridge that makes one closer to his Imam.

Certainly, if one feels a real need for Imam Mahdi, or in other words, when one understands his own inner and spiritual deficiencies and considers that the correction of his spiritual problems is in the hand of Imam Mahdi who is a perfect human and the deputy of Allah on the earth, he will become attached to the Imam and the love of the Imam will become created in his heart.

That is how the love and affection for Allah and His chosen people

are allowed to inter in man's heart (because if the heart is infected, that love and affection will find no way to get into the heart). At this moment, man who has fallen in love with Allah and his deputy gradually feels a deeper love in his heart and will become so tender-hearted that would shed tears just by a little talking and resorting to Allah, feels a strong willing on praying and worshipping Allah. He becomes eager to performing midnight prayers and supplications and to seeking forgiveness from Allah at twilight. He hates sin with all of his senses. He sheds tears when he appeals to the Imam of the Age and over time, he becomes closer to Imam Mahdi. Such a person will also love the friend of the Imam's friends; he seeks to guide those who have gone astray and turn people's attention to the Imam. He always tries to make the Imam loveable to people and to create the Imam's passion and love in the hearts of others. In this way, man will attract more attention from the Imam and the mutual love gains power and his love towards the Imam will intensify.

# Teenage Corner

## 1

### The Elephant Rope

A gentleman was walking through an elephant camp, and he spotted that the elephants were not being kept in cages or held by the use of chains. All that was holding them back from escaping the camp, was a small piece of rope tied to one of their legs.

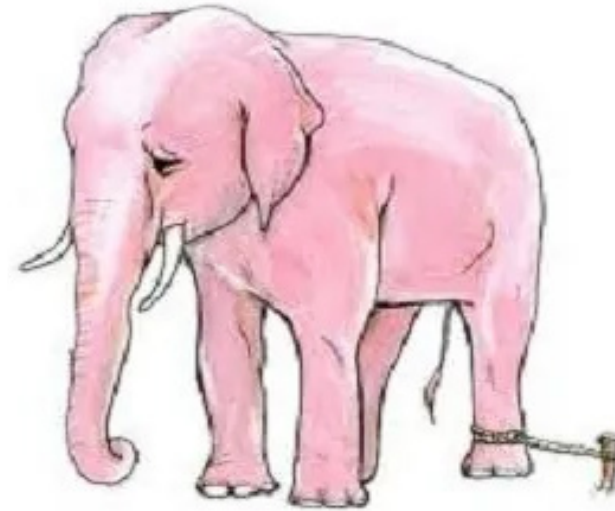
As the man gazed upon the elephants, he was completely confused as to why the elephants did not just use their strength to break the rope and escape the camp. They could easily have done so, but instead, they did not try to at all.

Curious and wanting to know the answer, he asked a trainer nearby why the elephants were just standing there and never tried to escape.

The trainer replied;

*“When they are very young and much smaller, we use the same size rope to tie them and, at that age, it is enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free.”*

The only reason that the elephants were not breaking free and es-



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caping from the camp was that over time they adopted the belief that it just was not possible.

### Moral points of the story:

No matter how much the world tries to hold you back, always continue with the belief that what you want to achieve is possible. Believing you can become successful is the most important step in actually achieving it. If from the beginning we witnessed that the world of Islam is entangled with oppression and injustice, and if from the time we realized we have an Infallible Imam, we were not in close contact with him, we should not think to solve the problems in our life is impossible. We need to trust our ability and rely on the mercy of Allah and move on. Imam Mahdi loves those who are active, physically strong, and mentally agile; not those who are disappointed, idle, and bored.

### Let's talk about it more

The fact is that, when man succumbs to small faults and wrong customs in his society and do not try to get rid of them or release himself from the captivity of Satan or at least, stop from wrong deeds, he will gradually get accustomed to his current situation and lose his self-confidence and remain inactive towards his problems. There will no longer exist any hope in his heart for a possible change.

One of the teachings of Mahdism is that a person who believes in the appearance of the Imam of the Age must always wait for the appearance of that Imam and never feel disappointed, desperate, and disable.

In fact, believing in the advent of the Saviour and the appearance of him gives man hope and energy to easily break the chains of sins and achieve true freedom. We should rely on our ability and move on with trusting in Allah and hoping for a bright and beautiful future. This is what Imam Mahdi expects us to do.

Imam Mahdi wants us to always remember him and pray for his coming by saying in a narration,

«أَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ بِتَعْجِيلِ الْفَرَجِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ فَرَجُكُمْ»<sup>1</sup>

*“Pray too much for my appearance, since indeed, your relief (from problems) is rested in it.”*

This makes us be always ready for his coming and it makes the ropes that are tied to our legs become open.

1. Kamāl al-Dīn, vol. 2, p. 485.



## 2

### Thinking Out of the Box

In a small Italian town, hundreds of years ago, a small business owner owed a large sum of money to a loan-shark. The loan-shark was a very old, unattractive looking guy that just so happened to fancy the business owner's daughter.

He decided to offer the businessman a deal that would completely wipe out the debt he owed him. However, the catch was that we would only wipe out the debt if he could marry the businessman's daughter.

Needless to say, this proposal was met with a look of disgust.

The loan-shark said that he would place two pebbles into a bag, one white and one black.

The daughter would then have to reach into the bag and pick out a pebble. If it was black, the debt would be wiped, but the loan-shark would then marry her. If it was white, the debt would also be wiped, but the daughter wouldn't have to marry the loan-shark. Standing on a pebble-strewn path in the businessman's garden, the loan-shark bent over and picked up two pebbles.

Whilst he was picking them up, the daughter noticed that he had picked up two black pebbles and placed them both into the bag.

He then asked the daughter to reach into the bag and pick one.

The daughter naturally had three choices as to what she could have done:

Refuse to pick a pebble from the bag;

Take both pebbles out of the bag and expose the loan-shark for cheating;

Pick a pebble from the bag fully well knowing it was black and sacrifice herself for her father's freedom.

She drew out a pebble from the bag, and before looking at it 'accidentally' dropped it into the midst of the other pebbles. She said to the loan-shark,

*"Oh, how clumsy of me. Never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked."*

The pebble left in the bag is black, and seeing as the loan-shark did not want to be exposed, he had to play along as if the pebble the daughter dropped was white, and clear her father's debt.

### Moral point of the story:

It is always possible to overcome a tough situation in our life and not give in to the only options we think we have to pick from.

As the same, a real expectant of Imam Mahdi should not be cheated easily by the mischievous people who try to cast doubt into the mind of people about their religion, and their Imam to disappoint them from their real Godly path.

You can always overcome difficult situations and do not give up easily in the face of options that you think you have no choice but to choose. Islamic hadiths advise the believers to be keen and clever and do not let others deceive them, especially during the absence of the Imam of the Age. In the era of the Imam's absence, some try to mislead people and weaken their belief regarding his coming. At this time, a believer carefully must monitor the activities of the deceitful enemies so he can detect their deception and do not be fooled by their conspiracy. If we obey religious commands and follow the true scholars of Islam during the absence of Imam Mahdi, the fateful plan of enemies not only cannot harm us but also, we can ruin their plan and use them against themselves.

Imam Mahdi, in order not to be deceived by the plans of the enemies, has guided us by saying

«أَمَّا الْحَوَادِثُ الْوَأَقَعَةُ فَارْجِعُوا فِيهَا إِلَى رِوَاةِ حَدِيثِنَا فَإِنَّهُمْ حُجَّتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنَا حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ»<sup>1</sup>  
*"As for the new occurrences, you should turn to the narrators of our Hadith because they are my proofs on you and I am Allah's proof on them."*

1. Kamāl al-Dīn, vol. 2, p. 484.



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**O our dear Imam! How long should we wait  
till you come? The world is waiting for you.**

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