

Triple Important Questions

[The Secret of Longevity](#)

Introducing the Criticism: We said that others criticize the belief of Shiites about Mahdi from the past that: If he is the son of Imam Hassan Askari and was born in the year 255 after Hijrah from his mother Narjis and is still alive then he is more than thousand years old now, while:

Neither our daily observations show us people with this old age!

Nor today's science accepts that!

Nor it has historical example!

Study and Research:

We agree the critics in this matter that normal and ordinary ages which we usually see are not more than one-hundred years, and rarely reaches one-hundred and twenty years, and in our time, people who have reached one-hundred and fifty or sixty are considered as exceptions in the world.¹

But it is not possible to suffice to these matters for a scientific discussion and research about the matter of the longevity and the following matter should be considered and we see that:

Does normal life have a constant limit? What does today's physiology say about that?

Is there any way of increasing the lifetime?

Were there exceptional people who were different with normal humans in physical, spiritual, body parts, different senses and other general characteristics?

Does history really remember people with ages older than what we can see today?

And above all, it should be considered that who are these critics and what is their understanding from

different religious issues?

Does Normal Life have a Constant Limit?

A small battery has limited lifetime; for example it works for 24 hours continuously; then its power ends.

For instance, a light bulb works for one thousand hours and then it dies.

Maybe an automobile works for 20 years.

Also, other human products have approximate specific lifetime and average limit; albeit, if user uses them in good conditions then they work more and if they are used in bad conditions then they work less than the specified amount.

We have also different kinds of lifetime in nature; there are particles inside atoms, which live for only one-thousandth of a second and sometimes "one-hundred millionth" of a second, but in change the age of the earth is estimated to five thousand million years!

Now we should see that whether the lifetime of living creatures in nature is like the lifetime of our industrial products or not. For example, human lives about 80 years; a dove lives about 5 years; an insect about some months; a plain tree lives about 150 years and a flower shrub about 6 months.

In the past, a group of scientists believed in a system of normal lifetime in living creatures. For example:

Pavlov believed that normal lifetime of human is 100 years.

Metchnikoff believed that normal lifetime of human is 150 to 160 years.

Kauffmann, German physician, believed that normal lifetime of human is 200 years.

Pflüger, famous physiologist, believed that normal lifetime of human is 600 years.

And finally Bacon, English philosopher and scientist increased the number and said it is about 1000 years.

But this belief has been denied by today's physiologists and the issue of constant limit of normal lifetime of human is invalidated.

According to Professor Smith, Columbia University: "As the sound barrier broke and moving equipments appeared with ultrasonic speed, some day the barrier of human lifetime will break and it goes beyond whatever we saw until now!"

The living evidence which is possible to introduce for proving this belief is the experiments that a group of scientists have performed on different plants or animals in laboratories and they were successful in increasing the lifetime of a living creature in conditions of laboratory up to "twelve times" more.

For example, an experiment which is performed on a plant with the lifetime of only two weeks shows that it is possible to keep it up to six months.

If assumable, such increment is possible on human lifetime then there will be humans with more than hundred years of age.

Another experiment has been performed on a fruit fly, which has a very short lifetime, and they were successful in increasing its lifetime up to “nine-hundred times”!

If assumable, this amazing and extraordinary increment becomes practical on human lifetime then a person lives more than seventy thousand years!

Albeit, most of us neither wish for such tiresome age nor accept it even for free, until the poet says:

من از دو روزه عمر آدمم بجان، ای خضر - چه می کنی تو که یک عمر جاودان داری

I am tired of these two days of life, O Khizr - What do you do who live forever

And if assumable we accept that, the earth is not ready for accepting this much of living humans!

But our goal is studying the issue of longevity scientifically.

We know that today, many biologists have seriously studied the issue of increasing human lifetime; if such thing was impossible then these researches seemed to be useless.

Nutritionists believe that lifetime is closely related with the way of eating and environmental conditions; they have studied the lifetime of queen bee, which lives several times more than normal bees, and have understood that this matter is the result of royal jelly which is produced by worker bees especially for the queen that is different with normal honey; and a group of scientists thought that it is possible to increase human lifetime for several times with large amounts of this jelly.

Psychologists say that human lifetime is strongly dependant on his/her thinking way and beliefs and human lifetime increases by having series of constructive and calming spiritualities and beliefs.

A group of physician believes that: Oldness is a kind of illness which appears because of atherosclerosis or “Metabolism Disorder”; and if we can overcome these factors by correct eating and effective medicine then we can defeat the oldness and we will have a long life.

All these discussions clearly proves this issue that the legend of “constant normal lifetime” is nothing more than a false legend; and it is not possible to consider a specific limit for the lifetime of living creatures.

Especially, by opening the way of space to humans and beginning of space travels, the issue of lifetime

was considered more seriously; because it has become certain that our short lifetimes are not proper for taking long astronomical journeys. Sometimes, several thousand years of age is needed for making a small step in this expanded universe with current spaceships and tens of thousands of years is needed for farther destinations; therefore, some scientists have thought about another way of increasing the lifetime and that is using freezing system.

Maybe, this matter was discovered for the first time by observing some of living creatures who had kept their normal life while being frozen; for example, some while ago a frozen fish was found inside polar ice that the condition of ice layers showed that the fish is for five-thousand years ago!

At first they thought that the fish is dead, but after putting it in warm water they surprisingly saw that it began moving; it is recognized that it was alive during these five-thousand years but with a weak flame of life!

At this point, they thought if it would be possible to use this method for humans and for example, if it is possible to freeze a space traveler in his/her cabin and an automatic system gradually brings his/her body to normal conditions after hundreds or thousands of years then the problem of lifetime in space travels would be solved.

Now, some of physicians have thought that they use this system for the patients whom their treatment method has not been found yet, and for example, propose to those who have cancer, to go to deep sleep – or beyond sleep – by freezing method, and for example, return to normal conditions after two centuries that the treatment method of these illnesses is naturally found and treat them.

All these discussion, plans and proposals show that according to today's knowledge, there is no constant limit for the lifetime of humans and other living creatures and its amount can be changed.

1. Some while ago I visited an old man who was not able of performing fasting in the holy month of Ramadan and was asking about the issue of atonement of fasting; I asked about his age and he answered 29 year old. And because he saw that I was surprised, he added that he doesn't count the hundred and I say after one hundred years which means I am 129 years old!

Existence of Exceptional People

If we ignore the previous discussion and accept that humankind has constant limit of lifetime according to his primary nature; but, it is not possible to generalize this matter to everyone, because always there are exceptions among living creature which are not compatible with standards and criterions which we saw in natural and experimental sciences; and sometimes, science is incapable of interpreting their conditions.

Some people have been seen among humans who had extraordinary and completely exceptional senses or powers.

Some members can be seen among a specific genus of trees or animals, which apparently have specific growth or seemingly limited lifetime, that breaks all regulations and standards of their genus and appear in an extraordinary form; for instance:

- 1) Travelers, who have visited Scotland, talk about an amazing tree with 90 feet diameter in trunk and estimated five thousand years of age!
- 2) A tree has been seen in California, which are one hundred meters tall! And its lower diameter is about 10 meter and its age is estimated up to six hundred years.
- 3) There is a tree from the genus dracaena or as it is called "dragon tree" among the trees which grow in Canary Islands, that has interested scientists; it is said about this tree that no change has been seen in its growth from the time of discovering the island (which is about five-hundred years ago)! But it seems to have a long life that through this time effects of time have not appeared on its feature; therefore, some people think that perhaps, this tree was available before the creation of Adam!
- 4) There are trees in tropical regions, which live forever! It means that they are continuously growing roots and shoots and never die.
- 5) Some snails have been seen which are thousands years old; and biologists have discovered some fishes which are about three million years old.
- 6) We can see some people with wonderful talents who are not believable even for those who see them with their own eyes. Who didn't read the news about the young person who bent metal objects like fork and spoon with the extraordinary power of his eyes without even a small touch of his hands!

He performed this wonderful job before the eyes of reporters and even on TV in England that even incredulous British people accepted that there was no special trick and it is considered a special and exceptional condition.

Maybe, all people have read about the young Iranian who eats light bulb and glass like candies, while ordinary people may be taken to operation room if they accidentally eat a bit of glass with their food!

I read the story of a person in newspaper who subdued wild animals with his extraordinary power and approach them easily.

It is written about the conditions of philosopher and famous physician "Avicenna" that:

When I went to school, I memorized anything which students read for the master; in the age of ten, I have knowledge of sciences that people were amazed of me in Bukhara; in the age of 12 I became a jurist! And issued fatwas in Bukhara; I wrote the book "The Canon of Medicine" in medicine at the age of 16 (the same book which was being taught in European universities for some centuries); amazing stories have been quoted about his different senses including sight or hearing and like them which cannot be

told in this brief chapter. [1](#)

These are all exceptional people with characteristics that scientists of natural science are incapable of explaining them and their conditions are not compatible with criterions and standards of human characteristics which are available; but this in harmony never prevent us to accept them; and accept a general law under its light that what we have seen in “plants”, “creatures of deserts and seas” and “humans” is not an eternal and comprehensive law; but it is completely possible that some members are found among them with special and extraordinary characteristics, whether about the age or about spiritual and physical powers and abilities; and their exceptional condition will never be the reason for acceptance of these phenomena to be unscientific; but we should accept that the boundaries of all the laws and criterions which sciences give us are restricted to ordinary members and exceptional members are beyond the boundaries of these criterions and laws.

Who Made this Criticism?

If materialists, who see everything from natural laws' point of view, make the criticism about the lifetime of Mahdi (as) then the answer is what has been said in previous discussions; but, if monotheists of the world like the followers of Christ (as) and Moses (as) or Sunni brothers make this criticism then we have other expressions for them adding to what we have said before, including:

1) They consider unlimited power for God and several extraordinary characteristics and miracles for his messengers; in other words, they consider God as the ruler of natural laws not being ruled by them; is treating incurable illnesses compatible with medical science, or are bringing back the dead to life by Christ or other wonderful miracles of Moses(as) by rod (a worthless piece of wood) and leprous hand and passing the Nile with that extraordinary event matters which are compatible with natural criterions and standards?

Undoubtedly, all the followers of religions say that the effects of natural laws and means are all by the order of God for interpretation of these phenomena, and anything he wills for something else then another thing happens and his will is beyond natural causes. If from the beginning dead people returned to life again or innate blind person gained his sight after a while or average limit of lifetime of an ordinary human was one-thousand years then was anyone surprised from these matters and did anyone consider them against the law of wisdom? ... Certainly not!

Therefore, breaking these laws is not breaking a rational and logical order; but it is breaking an ordinary condition and way to which we have been accustomed by observing ordinary people and things.

2) Today's Christians mostly believe that the enemies of Christ(as) crucified, killed and buried him; and after some days he rose from the dead and went to heavens and is still alive.

Although, Muslims don't accept the crucifixion and murder of Jesus – according to Qur'an; but they

believe that he is still alive; and this is the expression which all–Islamic scholars, except a few, have accepted.

If this exception is not against the wisdom, and it is possible for a human to become alive again after the death and burial and lives about two thousand years, then how is it possible to consider more simple cases impossible when it is only talked about a long life a little more than one thousand years!

3) There is no Muslim who denies the long life of Noah, because it is mentioned explicitly in Qur'an that only the time of his calling to monotheism was nine hundred and fifty years

فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا

Surah Ankabut 29: 14

Also, we have heard about Khizr and his loge life.

It is amazing that a group of people has accepted all these matters, but when they face the belief of Shiites about the age of “Mahdi”, they have surprising faces and move their head as the sign of denial and have smiles, which means that how these kinds of irrational and illogical beliefs can have followers?!...

This is a clear example of “being in one roof and having two climates” (referring to a Persian proverb)!

But, as we said before, the matter of longevity is completely understandable according to the logic of natural sciences regardless of the beliefs of monotheists about the power of God and the issue of miracles; the only problem in the way is that we free ourselves from prejudices and special biases, and traditions and costumes to which we have been accustomed and only surrender ourselves to reason and logic and free discussion!

We are amazed when we read in newspapers about a 140–years–old Austrian man who hadn't become ill through his lifetime, even once!

Or a man was completely young at the age of 167 in Colombia!

Or a man's hair was black at the age of 253 in china!

Because it is against ordinary and normal people; but if the sources of this news are reliable but it is written in all newspapers as certain news then we will accept it.

But why we are amazed when we read in hadith:

القائم هو الذي اذا خرج كان في سنّ الشيوخ و منظر الشبان؛ قوى في بدنه

When al-Qa'im rises, he has the age of the old but the face of the young and he is also physically powerful.

Shi'a says:

How don't we laugh at those who accept the long life of Noah and Christ and write these amazing characteristics about Avicenna, or after watching a young person bending metals just by looking at them, or observing too old creatures and trees? But when it is talked about the long life of Mahdi (as), a group has objecting faces and say surprisingly that how is it possible for a man to have this age!

The issue of longevity is not the issue, which can be denied or criticized, in a fair and logical judgment.

[The Philosophy of Long Occultation](#)

We said that another question which is asked about the belief of Shiites about Mahdi (as) is the issue of his long occultation which is asked after accepting the matter of long life and that is:

Why doesn't Mahdi rise while corruption and oppression are available enough in the world?

Why doesn't he move the world toward justice by his rise?

How long should we sit and watch the scenes of oppression and bloodshed of a bunch of criminals?

Why has his occultation lasted so long?

In fact, what is he waiting for?

And finally, what is the secret of this long occultation?

But it should be considered that although, this question is being asked from Shiites about the issue of occultation but it is recognized by a little notice that others also have a share of that; it means that, it points to other believers of the advent of a great universal peacemaker who should rise some day and fills the earth with justice in another form, however, they don't accept the belief of Shi'a about longevity and occultation.

Because this question could be asked that why that great universal peacemaker is not born yet and if he is born then why doesn't he rise and waters the thirsty world with justice? Therefore, it is a big mistake to only criticize Shi'a about this belief.

And in other words, there is no doubt that the issue of longevity (previous discussion) and the issue of the philosophy of existence of imam during the occultation (next discussion) are questions which are pointed only to Shiites, but the matter of delay in his advent is the issue which all those who believe in the advent of that great universal peacemaker should think about that why the great advent doesn't

happen by readiness of the world? (Attention!)

Anyway, this question has a short answer and an explained one; its short answer is that solely the existence of a competent revolutionary leader is not enough for establishment of a multidimensional revolution and public readiness is also necessary; and unfortunately, the world is not ready for accepting such government yet and when it becomes ready, his rise is certain!

But the explanation is that:

Firstly, it should be considered that – as we mentioned before – the plan of the rise of Mahdi uses natural tools and means, like the plan of the rise of all divine prophets, and it is never based upon miracles; miracles are exceptions and are not included in progress of reformist plans of divine leader, except in exceptional cases.

Accordingly, all prophets used modern weapons, teaching competent persons, necessary consultations, designing effective plans, studied military tactics and totally providing any kinds of material and spiritual facilities for reaching their goals; and didn't wait for a miracle everyday to defeat the enemies or in order to encourage the friends for advancing more in the way of perfection.

Therefore, the plan of government of truth and justice in the world should be established by the use of necessary material and spiritual means, except in exceptional cases.

In other words, Mahdi (as) doesn't bring new religion with him, but he executes divine plans, which are not executed. His prophecy is not only imparting, warning, teaching, training, advising and admonishing. His prophecy is executing all principles that end oppression, injustice and discrimination under the shadow of government of science and belief, and certainly execution of this plan is not possible without readiness and preparations.

Secondly, it is clear according to the above essential principle that hwy we say the existence of this readiness is not proved yet; because, at least, some kinds of readiness are needed for this matter:

Preparedness for Acceptance (Mental Preparedness)

The people of the world should understand the bitterness of this inharmonious conditions and injustices enough.

The people of the world should feel the incapability and incompleteness of human laws for execution of social justice.

The people of the world should understand this truth that only material principles and relations won't solve problems of the world and available execution assurances and regulations made by humans, but problems become more congested every day and more complicated like an endless clew.

The people of the world should feel that current crises are the results of current systems; and finally, these systems are incapable of solving the crises.

The people of the world should feel that new principles and systems are needed, which depend on human values, faith, human affections and moralities, for reaching this great goal not only harsh, soulless, incomplete material principles.

The people of the world should reach the stage of growth that understand the advancement of technology doesn't necessarily means the advancement of humanity and providing happiness for humans; but advanced technology can assure happiness only if it is installed under supervision of series of spiritual and human principles, otherwise – as we have seen many times – will cause catastrophe and destruction.

The people of the world should recognize that if industries become idols then current problems will become bigger and it increases the amount of destruction and harmful effects of wars; but they should become the tools under the control of competent humans.

Finally, the people of the world should become thirsty and until they are not thirsty they won't search for water streams.

And in other words, until there is no demand in the people of the world, offering no kind of corrective plan will be useful and effective; that the law of "demand and offer" should be more considered in social issues as it is interested in financial issues.

This question is asked that what should cause this condition of thirst and demand.

We answer: a part of that should be made by the pass of time and it is not possible without that, but another part depends on teaching and training; it should become practical by intellectual resurrection which is made by faithful thinkers and responsible aware persons of society.

At least, they should give this knowledge and understanding with their human-maker programs to the people of the world that essential problems of the world won't be solved by available principles, laws and methods. And anyhow, it also needs time.

Cultural and Industrial Evolution

Gathering all the people of the world, dethroning the tyrants in everywhere, expanding education at its maximum level in all stages, clearing this matter completely that difference of language, race, and geographical region and like that is not a reason for the people of the world not to live in a family like brothers and life in peace, justice and brotherhood, and providing a healthy and enough economy for all the humans needs cultural growth and advancement of human knowledge on the one hands, and evolution of industrial equipments on the other hand; equipments which can connect all parts of the

world very fast, close and permanently, which it is not possible without the pass of time, either.

How is it possible for a government to control the entire world if connections are slow!

How is it possible to rule the world by the equipments, which need one or some years for sending a message to faraway parts of the world!

It is understood from a part of narratives, which picture the lifestyle of the people of the world at the time of Mahdi(as), – and we will discuss about it completely later, God willing – that the advancement of technology and industries, especially transmissions and communications, in that time is in the way that large continents of the world practically become as some neighbor cities; and even the East and the West will be considered as one home; the problem of the time and place will be completely solved.

Albeit, it is possible that some of these matters happen in that time in the form of an industrial revolution, but anyway, a scientific preparedness is needed as the background at the beginning of this age.

Training a Revolutionary Strike Force

Finally, a group of people, although in minority, is needed to form the core of the army of that great peacemaker.

Flowers should grow among this burning hell to be the beginning of a flower garden; saplings should be grown in this heath in order to promise the spring for the others.

Extraordinary aware, brave, compassionate, devoted persons should be trained for this act, although generations pass one after another for this purpose, until the main reservations appear and main members of the revolution are gathered, and it also need time.

But, who should take the responsibility of training these persons?

We should know that it is upon that great leader who executes such plan directly or indirectly (for explanation about this matter will be mentioned in the next discussion, god willing).

In Islamic narratives, one of the reasons of long occultation is said to be the issue of public examination and choosing the most competent one, which maybe points to this subject.

Explanation: Divine human examinations are not like the examination for measuring the abilities of the one who is being examined, but they are for training the talents and disclosing the abilities and separating the rows from each other.

And in other words, their goal is training, evolution or preparing; because unlimited knowledge of God about everything removes any kind of goal of measuring from the examinations.

Totally, this discussion cleared that why the occultation of Mahdi should be so long?

The Philosophy of Existence of Imam during the Occultation

Another question which is asked about the belief of Shi'a about Mahdi (as) and its characteristics is that:

Imam (as) is leader anyway and existence of a leader can be useful if he has continues contact with his followers; how is it possible for an occult and unseen Imam to play the role of a leader?!

In other words, life of Imam (as) during the occultation is a personal life not a social life as a leader; in this case, we have the right to ask that what is the effect of this divine reservation for public and how can people take benefit from him?

He is like the pure stream of life that is in occultation and no one has access to him!

Moreover, essentially, is the meaning of occultation of Imam (as) becoming an invisible soul or unseen waves and like them?

Is it compatible with science?

Undoubtedly, this is an important question; but it is a mistake to assume that it has no answer; but let us first answer the last question, which has caused a complicated misunderstanding for a group of people and then clearing other questions.

We should explicitly say that the meaning of the occultation of Imam(as) – as we have said before – is not in the way that the existence of Imam(as) during the occultation is an invisible and dreamy existence that is more like an imaginative existence to an objective one.

But, about the life, he has an external objective life, but with a long life; he lives among the people and inside societies and lives in different places; and if there is an exception in his life is that he has a long life; that's all.

He lives in human society unknown, and nobody has said anything else about his occultation; and what a difference between “unknown” and “invisible”!

Now that this misunderstanding is removed, we talk about this matter that:

Well, but this kind of life maybe justifiable for an ordinary person, but is it acceptable for a leader – and a great divine leader?

What benefit could a student take, who doesn't know his teacher, or a patient person who doesn't know his physician and the clinic, or a thirsty person who doesn't find the water stream – although it is close to him?!

It is interesting that:

This question is not being asked only today; it is understood from Islamic narratives that even it was being asked before the birth of Mahdi (as) during the time of previous Imams and when they talked about Mahdi and the time of his occultation, they faced such question and answered it eagerly that we mention some of the example as follows:

Benefit of Existence of Imam during the Occultation

Benefit of Existence of Imam during the Occultation²

There is a meaningful and interesting expression in several different ahadith, which have been reached us about the philosophy and benefit of existence of Imam (as) during the occultation, in a short phrase which can be a key for discovering this great secret and that is the answer of Prophet (S) for the question about the benefit of existence of Mahdi (as) during his occultation; he said:

اى والذى بعثنى بالنبوة انهم ينتفعون به، و يستضيئون بنور ولايته فى غيبه كانتفاع الناس بالشمس و ان جلّها السحاب

(Yes, I swear to the one who chosen me, people take benefit from the light of his leadership during his occultation like they take from the Sun behind the clouds!)³

We should understand the role of the Sun generally and when it is behind the clouds for understanding this key:

The Sun has two kinds of refulgence:

Apparent refulgence

And hidden refulgence

On in other words, “direct refulgence” and “indirect refulgence”.

In apparent refulgence sunlight can be seen clearly, although thick layer of air which has surrounded the earth acts as a think glass; a glass which both reduces the degree of refulgence of the Sun and makes it bearable, and filters the sunlight and nullifies its deadly radiations, but it doesn't prevent direct refulgence of the Sun.

But in indirect refulgence, clouds take the sunlight like a mate glass and distribute it.

Sunlight has the most important role in the living world and the life of living creatures:

The sunlight, which shines from the Sun to everywhere, is the only source of energy for moving living

motors of life in plants, animals and humans:

Growth of living creatures,

Their feeding and reproduction,

Feeling, movement and action,

Watering the dead lands,

Roar of sea waves,

Life-giving blow of the winds,

Life-Making shower of the rain and snow,

The murmur of waterfalls,

Singing voices of the birds,

Dazzling beauty of flowers,

Blood circulation inside human veins and heartbeats,

Hyper speed movement of thoughts inside the curtains of the brain,

And sweet smile on the lips of petals like an infant and ...

All and all depends on sunlight directly or indirectly and all of them will faint without that, and it can be recognized with a little notice.

Well, now this question is asked that aren't these benefits and life-giving effects exclusive to the time of direct refulgence?

The answer of this question is clear: no, many of these effects are also available in mate sunlight when the Sun is behind the clouds.

For example, in countries or cities which are covered by clouds some months of the year sunlight cannot be seen, but heat, growth of plants, production of necessary energy for motors of life, ripeness of cereals and fruits and laughter of flowers and blooms are available.

Therefore, refulgence of the Sun from behind the curtains of clouds has an important part of its benefits; and only a part of its effects which needs direct refulgence is not available; for example, we know that sunlight has vital effects of the skin and other parts of the body of humans and other living creatures and accordingly in countries which people are deprived of this gift, they take sunbath in sunny

days; and become naked in front of this life-giving light and take each particle of this light by all of their body which is thirsty for this divine gift.

Also, direct sunlight has disinfecting effect – because of ultraviolet radiation – which purifies the environment adding to more lightness and heat which is not available in indirect refulgence.

We conclude from the above discussion that although curtains of clouds take some of effects of the sunlight but an important part of it still remains.

This was the condition of sunlight and now we return to the conditions of existence of divine leaders during occultation.

Invisible spiritual radiation of existence of Imam (as) when it is hidden behind the clouds of occultation has different considerable effects that disclose the philosophy of his existence, regardless of removing the issue of direct education and training.

These effects are as follows:

Promising Effect

In the battlefield, all the efforts of a group of experienced and self-devoted soldier is to hold the flag fluttering in the sky against the strikes of the enemy; while the enemy soldiers continuously try to upset the flag of oppositions, because when the flag remains fluttering it gives hope to soldiers and they continue their efforts.

Also existence of the commander of the army in headquarter – although he is apparently quite – moves the bloods inside the veins of the soldiers and encourage them to try more that our commander is still alive and our flag is fluttering in the sky!

But, when the news of death of the commander is heard a great army with extraordinary power will be suddenly demolished, maybe cold water is poured on everyone's head, no, but their soul has left their bodies!

While the head of a group or a country is alive, although he is in travel or is ill, but he is the cause of life, action, order and peace of his people; but news of his departure is the despair of everyone.

Shiites don't consider themselves to be alone according to the belief they have about the living Imam, although they don't see him among themselves. (Attention!)

Shiites always are expecting the return of him who has traveled that has the caravan of hearts with him, a constructive and effective waiting and expect his advent everyday.

The mental effect of this thinking way in keeping hopes alive in the hearts and forcing people to self-

improvement and preparing for that great revolution, which had been explained in the discussion of “waiting”, is completely comprehensible.

But if this leader doesn't exist at all and the adherents of his school are waiting for his birth and growth in the future then the conditions are much different.

And if we add another point to this subject then the issue will be more serious, and that is:

According to general belief of Shiites which has been mentioned in many religious narratives, Imam continuously care about his followers during the occultation; and he is informed about the conditions of their acts through divine intuition and according to the narratives, the report of their acts is presented to him each week and become informed about the way of their actions and speeches.⁴

This thought caused all the believers to be always aware and pay attention to that superior supervision while entering any act; training effect of this thinking way is also undeniable.

Guarding the Religion of God

“Ali”, that great human of the history, says in one of his short expressions in which he points to the necessity of existence of divine leaders in any time and age:

اللَّهُمَّ بَلَى لَا تَخْلُو الْأَرْضَ مِنْ قَائِمٍ لَكَ بِحُجَّةٍ أَمَّا ظَاهِرًا مَشْهُورًا وَ أَمَّا خَائِفًا مَغْمُورًا لِئَلَّا تَبْطُلَ حُجُجُ اللَّهِ وَ بَيِّنَاتِهِ

“Yes, the surface of the earth will never be without the al-Qa'im who has proof; whether apparent and famous or hidden and unknown, in order for divine proofs and evidences not to be invalidated and forgotten (and not to be distorted and transformed).”⁵

Now, pay attention to the explanation of this expression:

By the pass of time and mixing religious issues with personal tastes and thoughts and different inclinations to deceptive programs of aberrant schools, and when corrupted persons reach divine concepts, genuineness of some of these meanings will be lost and transformed.

This pure water, which has been descended from the sky of afflatus, has gradually become polluted and dark during passing the minds of others and has lost its beginning purity and freshness.

This shining light will shimmer by passing through the dark glasses of darn thoughts.

And finally, narrow-minded adds and reduce so much to and from that, in the way that sometimes, it is hard to recognize the main issues!

And as the poet says – albeit in the exaggerated way of the poets – talking to prophet:

شرع تو را در پی آرایشند دین تو را از پی پیرایشند

بس که فزودند بر آن برگ و بر گر تو ببینی نشناسی دگر

They are making up your canon law

They are cutting from your religion

As much they have added to that

You won't recognize it when you see

In these conditions, isn't it necessary for a person to be among Muslims in order to keep the eternal teachings of Islam in its main shape for the future ones?

Will afflatus be revealed to another person again? Certainly not! The chapter of afflatus is closed forever after the last of prophets.

Then how genuine religion should be kept safe, and distortion and transformations and superstitions be prevented for this religion to remain safe for the next generations. Is there any method other than continuing this way by an infallible leader, whether to be apparent and famous or hidden and unknown?

لئلا تبطل حجج الله و بَيِّنَاتِهِ

We know that there is an "indestructible chest" in every institution, which holds important documents of that institute in order to remain safe from robbery; moreover, for example they don't be destroyed in fire that reputation of the institute is closely dependent on keeping those documents.

Chest of Imam and his high soul is the indestructible chest for keeping the documents of divine religion that holds all the beginning essentials and heavenly characteristics of these teachings "in order for divine proofs and clear signs of the God not to be invalidated and forgotten".

And this is another one of the effects of his existence – adding to other effects.

[Training an Aware Revolutionary Group](#)

Against what some people think, Imam is not completely disconnected from people during the occultation; but as it is understood from Islamic narratives, a small group of most prepared persons who have the love of the God, hearts filled with belief and extraordinary sincerity for establishing the ideal of correcting the world, are in connection with him and they improve gradually through this connection; and

take more–revolutionary passion; a constructive and fruitful revolution for removing any kind of oppression and injustice from the world!

Maybe they die before this revolution but anyhow, they transfer revolutionary preparedness and teachings to their next generations and the others, and have a share in training the final group.

We previously said that the meaning of the occultation of Imam is not that he becomes an invisible soul or unseen radiation, but he has a normal peaceful life; and lives among people unknown and chooses the most prepared hearts and takes them and make them more prepared than the past.

Capable persons gains the benefits of this opportunity according to their capability and competence; some people have connection with him for some moments; and some persons for some hours and some days; and some persons have connection with him closely for years!

In clearer way, they are those who have sit on the wings of knowledge and virtue and have soared that are above the clouds like the passengers of high–flying airliners; the place where there is no cover and obstacle in the way of life–giving refulgence of the Sun, while others live beneath the clouds in darkness and faint light.

And it is the correct counting; I shouldn't expect that the sun comes beneath the clouds and I see its face; such expectation is a big mistake and useless imagination; it is me who should fly above the clouds in order to drink the eternal radiations of the Sun portion by portion and become sated.

Anyhow, training this group is another one of the philosophies of his existence during this time.

Spiritual and Unaware Influence

We know that the Sun has some visible rays which seven famous colors appears as the result of their combination; and some invisible rays which are called “Ultraviolet” and “infrared”.

Also, a great divine leader, whether to be prophet or Imam, has a kind of spiritual teachings and through the spiritual influence on hearts and thoughts that can be called genetic education, adding to legislative teachings which is performed through speech, acts and ordinary education; in that method, words and expressions and actions don't work but only inner gravity and attraction works.

We read in the story of many of great divine leaders that sometimes, some corrupted and aberrant persons changed their ways completely only by a small contact with them, and their destiny was changed suddenly and as it is said, they chose a completely different way by 180 degrees turn; suddenly, they become a pure, believer and self–devoted person who didn't refuse to even pay their life!

These fast and multidimensional changes, these mutational and sweeping revolutions, and only with one look or small contact (albeit for those who have a kind of preparedness while being polluted) cannot be

the results of ordinary teachings and trainings, but is the result of an invisible mental effect and an unaware attraction, which is sometimes also called “influence of personality”.

Some of the people have experienced this matter in their lives that when they meet those who have great and superior souls they are influenced by them unaware and involuntarily that even talking becomes hard before them; and find them inside a mysterious and indescribable halo of greatness.

Albeit, sometimes it is possible to justify these matters by empathy and like that, but certainly, this interpretation is not correct for all cases, and there is no way other than accepting that these effects are the result of the mysterious radiation which is from the inside of the soul of great humans.

We see lots of biographies in the history of great leaders, which are not interpretable in other than this way; the story of a corrupted young person who came to Prophet (S) and his sudden spiritual change.

Or meeting of the idolater, As'ad ibn Zararah, with Prophet (S) near the house of Ka'ba and sudden change of his thinking way.

Or the thing which was called charm by the enemies of Prophet (S) and beware people from getting close to him because of that; all of them confirms the influence of personality of Prophet (S) on different people through this way.

Also, the story which is narrated about the effects of the message of Imam Hussein(as) on “Zuhayr” in the way of Karbala that he couldn't eat the food which was in his hand and put in on the ground and moved.

Or amazing and wonderful attraction that Hurr ibn Yazid al-Riyahi felt inside him, and was shaking by having that courage; and finally this attraction took him to the row of Mujtahids of Karbala and gained the great honor of martyrdom.

Or the story of a young person who was living in the neighborhood of “Abu Basir” and was living a corrupted life by the wealth which he has collected through serving Umayyad government and finally, changed completely by a message of Imam Sadiq (as), and changed all of his acts and return the properties, which we have collected in unlawful ways, to their owners.

Or the story of coquettish beautiful singer bondwoman who was sent by Harun to prison in order to deviate the mind of Imam Kazim(as), and revolution of her thoughts in a short time, in the way that her appearance, way of talking and logic amazed and frightened Harun ...

All and all are the examples and signs of this unaware influence that we can consider that a branch of “Genetic Authority” of Prophet (S) or Imam (as), because the factor of training and evolution here is not expressions, sentences and ordinary and normal ways, but spiritual attraction and influence are considered as main factors.

This program – as we said before – is not exclusive to prophets and Imams; but men of truth and great persons have a halo of this unaware influence according to the amount of their personality, but the circles of the first and the second group are not comparable.

Existence of Imam (as) behind the curtains of the occultation has also this effects that attracts and influence prepared hearts in near and far places though his powerful and expanded radiation of his personality influence and trains and completes them and make them complete humans.

We don't see the magnetic poles of the earth, but their effect on compasses guides the ships in the sea and guides airplanes and other equipments in deserts and sky. Because of the benefit of these magnetic waves, millions of travelers find their ways to their destinations on the entire earth, or big and small vehicles become free of wandering by the order of this apparently small pointer.

Is it surprising that existence of Imam (as) during the occultation guides thoughts and souls in near and far and make them free of wandering by the waves of his spiritual attraction?

But, it shouldn't be forgotten and we cannot forget it that as magnetic waves of the earth don't affect any scrap metal, and only affects sensitive and fine pointers which are magnetized and has become similar to the sender of the waves, the hearts which have a way with Imam and have saved a similarity inside will be affected and influenced by that indescribable spiritual attraction.

By considering what we said above, another one of the effects and philosophies of existence of Imam (as) during this time is recognized.

Showing the Goal of Creation

No wise person makes a step without a goal, and any movement that is made under the light of wisdom and science will be toward a goal.

With this difference that usually, goal of humans in their acts is fulfilling their needs, but in God's works, the goal is fulfilling the needs of others; because his pure essence is unlimited in any aspect and is free of any deficiency and in this case, performing an act in his benefit doesn't make any sense.

Now, notice to this example:

We make a garden of flowers and fruits in a prepared land; weeds grow among the trees and flowers; when we water the garden the weeds also take its benefits.

Here, we have two goals:

Main goal, which is watering the fruit trees and flowers.

And the following goal, which is watering the useless weeds.

Undoubtedly, the following goal cannot be the motive of the action, or justifies the wisdom behind it; the important one is the main goal, which is logical!

Now, if we assume that most of the trees of the garden die and nothing remains but one tree; but a tree that solely gives us fruits and flowers which we expect from a garden then we continue the watering program even for that one tree, although many weeds takes the benefits of this program. And if some day that tree dies then we stop watering and gardening, however, the weeds also die.

Universe of existence is like that fresh garden and humans are its trees and shrubs.

Those who are in the way of perfection are fruitful trees.

And those who have deviated from the right way and have been corrupted are the weeds of this garden.

Certainly, this shining sunlight, these life-giving molecules of the air, these gifts of the earth and the sky are not created for a bunch of corrupted persons to fight each other and eat each other and have no product for the society other than oppression, injustice, ignorance and corruption; No! The goal of creation can never be this!

This world with all of its gifts – in the eye of a monotheist person who is familiar with concepts like science and wisdom of God – is created for pure and righteous ones; as finally, it will be taken from the usurpers and will be given to them (انَّ الارض يرثها عبادى الصّالِحون).

Gardener of creation (the universe of existence) continues his mercy and gifts because of this group, although weeds are being watered as a following goal and takes the benefits; but undoubtedly, they are not the main goal.

And if assumably, a day comes in which the last generation of righteous ones leave the earth then there is no reason for continuing this gifts in that day.

That day, the world will lose its peace, and sky will stop its gifts, and the earth will refuse to give benefit to humans!

Prophet of Imam is the symbol of the group of righteous ones and the example of perfect human; which means the same group that forms the main goal of creation and accordingly, his existence solely or as the head of the group of righteous ones justifies the goal of creation and the cause of descending the gifts and fall of the rain of the mercy of God; whether he lives apparent among the people or occulted and unknown.

It is correct that each of other righteous persons are a goal for creation, or in other words, a part of the great goal, but the perfect example of this goal are these exemplary humans and divine men, although the share of others are secured.

And it is cleared here that what is mentioned in some of narratives that:

“بیمنه رزق الوری و بوجوده تثبت الارض و السماء”

People have their aliments because of his (who is the proof and representative of God) blessings and the earth and the sky are stable because of his existence!” is not an “exaggerated”, “illogical” or “polytheistic” matter; also, the expression which has been quoted in famous books as a divine hadith to holy Prophet (S):

“لولاک لما خلقت الافلاک”

If it wasn't for you I didn't create heavens!

Is expressing a truth not exaggeration! But, he is the masterpiece goal of creation and each of other righteous ones forms a part of this great goal.

We conclude from what has been said in this chapter under five titles that:

Those who are far from the center and consider the existence of Imam during the occultation as a personal and socially useless existence and have attacked the belief of Shi'a in this subject that what would be the benefits of existence of such Imam in the position of a leader and Imam of the nation, is not in the way that they said, and his existence has also many benefits in this condition.

- [1.](#) Refer to the book “Hadyat al-Ahbab” and other history books.
- [2.](#) I wrote this part of the book in Naeen police station in which I was practically imprisoned for one day when they were transferring me from Mahabad exile place to Anarak exile place (May 30th, 1979).
- [3.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, page 93.
- [4.](#) These narratives are available in the interpretation “Burhan”, beneath the verse “” Surah Tawbah 9: 105); and we have an interesting discussion about that in vol. 8 of Tafsir –e– Nemoune.
- [5.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, aphorisms, number 147.

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