

# The Awaited Hope

## Introduction

On instructions from the Almighty, Prophet Muhammad, appointed twelve successors to lead the nation after him, with the first of these imams being Imam Ali, and the twelfth Imam Mahdi, peace be upon them. With the exception of the twelfth imam who went into occultation, every one of the imams were killed by the adversaries of their time. Imam Mahdi was born in the middle of the month of Sha‘ban, year 255 AH, is alive who lives amongst us, but is hidden from our views. By Allah’s leave, Imam Mahdi will reappear, when the world is ridden with oppression and injustice, and will fill it with justice and fairness. Imam Mahdi is the savior who has been sought and awaited for many generations not only of Muslims but of the followers of other religions that have promised their followers of such a savior. Editors.

- ❖ Just as the Almighty has promised, Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, will accomplish and realize the ultimate goal that Almighty Allah sought from sending all His prophets and messengers, beginning from Adam to the final prophet, peace be upon them all.
- ❖ Indeed, the Master, the Imam of the Time, will honor us by his presence, by the leave of Allah, and appear to all mankind, and will announce to the world that he is the Mahdi of the progeny of Muhammad, peace be upon them.
- ❖ The Imam of our time is Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, whose mention has filled the text sources and reference books of all Muslims in terms of hadith, narrations, and citations, all of which illustrate his distinguished lineage as

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well as his merits and attributes, and that he is the descendant of Ali and Fatima peace be upon them, and that [today] he is the only one to whom the attributes of “the Imam whose obedience is mandatory” apply. By the will and command of Almighty Allah, he is alive and he witnesses the deeds and conducts of mankind, in particular the Shi’a, and more specifically the religious scholars and students.

- ❖ The Imam of our Time, may Allah hasten his reappearance, sees us and sees our conducts, as it is reported in the exegesis (*tafsir*) of the Qur’anic ayah [And say (unto them): Act! Allah will see your actions, and (so will) His messenger and the believers].<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ The issue of Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, is one of those deep and vast issues which are of various fields and numerous branches. The duty of every one of us is to carry out extensive studies in this important topic.
- ❖ As reported in the hadith, Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, is endorsed and supported by the Holy Spirit,<sup>2</sup> and between him and Almighty Allah<sup>3</sup> there is a column of light in which he sees the conducts of the people, and everything he needs [to know]; thus he hears our speech, and sees us, our conducts, and whatever we commit. He also sees beyond our speech and our writings. He sees our thoughts and our intentions. He sees the thing we think of when we speak or write; for example whether our thoughts and intentions were for Allah, or in order to show off. These matters are seen by the Imam too. He sees these in us in every hour and every moment.

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur’an, (9):105

<sup>2</sup> Support by the Holy Spirit is cited in the Holy Qur’an: 2:87, 2:253, 5:110, 16:102, and 58:22.

<sup>3</sup> That is: the will of Almighty Allah.

- ❖ If you want to know Imam Mahdi's conduct when dealing with friends and foes, then look at the conduct of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali, peace be upon him; his glowing history is before you – compiled by the Shi'a, Sunnis, Jews, Christians, and others.
- ❖ Do you want to know more about the government of Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honourable reappearance? Then look at the history of the Holy Prophet [Muhammad] and the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali, peace be upon them and their holy families.
- ❖ If you want to know Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, then look at the events that depict the life of the holy Prophet, and the *ma'soom* Imams amongst his household, peace be upon them; how they used to live, how they used to interact and mix with the people, and how they behaved in war and peace.
- ❖ Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, is a complete mirror image of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his holy family, in everything other than Prophet hood. He is also a mirror image of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali, with the exception of his superiority peace be upon him. So how beautiful life is under the auspices of the Imam of the Time, may Allah hasten his reappearance.
- ❖ The policy of Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, matches that of his grandfather the Prophet Muhammad; even his characteristics are entirely similar to those of the honorable prophet, peace be upon him and his holy family.
- ❖ To love Imam al-Mahdi is to adore him and adore the beautiful life under his auspices.

- ❖ If the minds of the people are perfected, their lives would be pleasant and comfortable; it would be the best life a generation can live. This would be the state of most people on the day of appearance of the Imam of the Time, may Allah hasten his reappearance, and not an exceptional case for some; most people would in that era lead a comfortable, prosperous, opulent, and honorable life.
- ❖ It is our intense devotion for the Imam of our Time, Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, that propels us to strive and endeavor to adhere to the conducts that lead us to the honor of meeting him during the period of his occultation, which is indeed a very important goal and a great longing, and whoever succeeds in this has attained an exalted station and a lofty honor.
- ❖ It is a great honor that one meets one's Imam and kisses his hands – and there is no doubt about that – but the question is that is this what the Imam expects from us? And is this our sole duty and responsibility?
- ❖ It is the duty of every *mokallaf*<sup>1</sup> to learn and know the obligations, as well as the prohibited acts and conducts; so that everyone fulfils their duties accordingly, teaches them to others and enjoins them to adhere to and practice such duties, to an extent that sufficiency is attained [in teaching and enjoining]. This is our duty, and this is what pleases Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, and makes him content with us. Whoever fulfils one's duty in a correct and a precise manner would be contented with in the sight of the Imam, but one who does not fulfil one's duty would not be contented with in the sight of the Imam.

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<sup>1</sup> *mokallaf* literally means duty-bound, and in this respect it means one who has reached the age of adolescence when one is obliged to fulfil one's religious duties such as observing the five daily prayers, the fasting of the holy month of Ramadan, etc.

- ❖ We beseech Almighty Allah that we stay alive so that we can realize the reappearance of the Imam, may Allah hasten his reappearance, and be in his service, but you should know that the degrees attained on that day would be based on our role and endeavor, and the fulfilment of our duty today.
- ❖ If we, during the era of occultation, want to secure the content of the Authority and Imam of the Time, then this matter is strongly tied to the extent of our knowledge and understanding of the duty and obligation we have, and the fulfilment and practice of those two.
- ❖ Sins are filth and dirt, snakes and scorpions, which cover us from head to toes, and these hinder us from attaining the honor of meeting the Imam of the Time, may Allah hasten his reappearance. In other words, we are not, because of them, worthy and befitting of meeting him, peace be upon him, and therefore we are deprived of that achievement.
- ❖ The goal which Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, will appear for would have been realized by the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali, peace be upon him, if the *Ummah* had stood steadfastly on the Prophet's religion and adhered to it.
- ❖ If Islam is established – the Islam of Allah's Messenger, the Islam of *Amir al-Mo'mineen*, the Islam of Imam Husayn, and the Islam of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them all – in any part of the world, in a short space of time, poverty and injustice would disappear, and so too every kind of corruption and deviation. Instead of that, morality, prosperity, goodness and happiness would take place. This is what the Promised and the Awaited Imam Mahdi, peace be upon him and may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would accomplish in the best possible way at the time of his blessed reappearance.

- ❖ The concurrence of the occasion of the birth of our master and patron, the Awaited Imam Mahdi, peace be upon him and may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, with the 15<sup>th</sup> of the holy month of Sha‘ban, the eve of which Almighty Allah has designated as the night of allotment of provisions, blessings, and destinies for people, and also emphasis of the *ma‘soom* Imams, peace be upon them, on visiting the shrine of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, on this great occasion, is no coincidence, as there is no serendipity in Allah’s business. Rather, there is a strong concurrence and real connection between these three events.
  
- ❖ Almighty Allah honored and exalted the 15<sup>th</sup> of the holy month of Sha‘ban before the birth of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, and before the birth of Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance. Thereafter, with all prophets, including the senior prophets, and especially the master and final of the messengers, the honorable Prophet [Muhammad] peace be upon them, seeking Almighty Allah’s permission to visit Imam Husayn’s shrine every year. Furthermore, the birth of the Imam of the Time took place on this occasion too. These [three] events [did not take place by chance but] there is the strongest existential (*takwini*) connection between them. Almighty Allah revealed an aspect of this connection by making these three events to take place in one space of time.<sup>1</sup> The common factor that can be taken between these is the “setting of destiny”, for the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the holy month of Sha‘ban is the night when the fate, destiny, provisions, and blessings for the entire humanity are determined.
  
- ❖ It is the Awaited Imam, may Allah hasten his honourable reappearance, who by Allah’s leave will determine the fate and destiny of humanity,

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<sup>1</sup> In that: three different occasions of different eras take place on one particular day and its night of the year, which is the 15<sup>th</sup> of Sha‘ban.

and will make Allah's light which was spread by the prophetic mission to reach every corner of the world.

- ❖ [The significance of *imamate* or the leadership of the nation after the prophet is so great that] the honorable Prophet, peace be upon him and his holy family, put one's ignorance of one's Imam of the Time on a par with polytheism and disbelief such that [if one dies in that state] one would die the death of the era of ignorance [i.e. the pre-Islamic era].<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Ignorance about Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honourable reappearance, will lead the individual to deviation and straying from the right path, and thus as he proceeds further he will be more distant from the target, until he will end up in a state that the people of the era of ignorance were.
- ❖ It is imperative for us to strive and do our utmost in learning about the Imam of our Time, so that we protect ourselves from the danger of falling into the abyss, muddle and confusion.
- ❖ Without a correct understanding about Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, along with ignorance or misunderstanding about the analysis of some hadith which predict what his policies and code of conduct will be, not to mention the false and fabricated of the narrations, prompted some to imagine or even accuse the [*ma'soom*] Imam, may Allah hasten his reappearance, of things which would not be fitting for an ordinary individual.

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<sup>1</sup> Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him and his holy family, said: "One who dies and does not know the Imam of his Time, he has died the death of the era of ignorance." [i.e. he does not die a Muslim.] *wasal-Shi'a*, vol.16, p246. *Musnad Ahmad*, vol.4 p96. *Sahih Muslim*, vol.6 p22. *Majma' al-Zawa'id*, vol.5 p218.

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- ❖ It is unfortunate that some are used to painting a harsh and violent picture about Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, arguing that he would establish his government through the use of sword against his enemies and shedding their blood, citing some [fabricated] narrations in this respect, thus fostering this notion in the minds of some of the people.
- ❖ The mission of Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, is to establish justice and eradicate wronging and oppression, and therefore it is unreasonable that he would accomplish justice through wronging and oppression; or revive the tradition of his grandfather the Chosen One and the Commander of the Faithful (*Amir al-Mo'mineen*) Imam Ali, peace be upon them, through false innovations.
- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, will eradicate from the world anything that speaks in the name of Islam but inside it is against Islam; so that he would establish the true government for the real Islam.
- ❖ As he executed the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, the Gracious Prophet, peace be upon him and his holy family, eliminated what was before [Islam] with kindness and leniency; using this approach with all the people including the infidels and not just the Muslims. The same will be with Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, who will use the same approach with the infidels let alone the Muslims.
- ❖ If Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would treat the infidels with kindness, how would he then treat the Muslims?

- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, is like his grandfather the honorable Prophet, about whom the Almighty said, [It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal with them leniently], and thus he would follow the steps of his gracious grandfather, and would not diverge from them by an iota.
- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, fundamentally comes to establish the principles of justice – the justice that forms a natural dispositional demand for mankind. Therefore, it is not possible that the Imam would adopt a policy that would repel the masses from him; wishing they had never seen him, or doubt his lineage to the progeny of the prophet, peace be upon him and his holy family, because of harshness and violence.
- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would not establish the foundation of his rule on the basis of harshness and violence, but rather it would be on the basis of justice, lenience, mercy, and kindness.
- ❖ When the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali, peace be upon him, declares his magnificent statement: “Do you expect me to seek victory through tyranny and injustice?” No doubt that Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would follow the same policy, for he is the pleasant fruit of the same blessed tree [of *imamate*].
- ❖ When the Imam of the Time reappears, may Allah hasten his reappearance, the divine promise [that He may cause it to prevail overall religion] will be realized, and Islam will prevail throughout the planet Earth, and all will submit to Almighty Allah.

- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would not follow other than the footsteps of his honorable forefathers.
- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, would make judgment between the people according to his knowledge and according to procedure of Prophet David, peace be upon him.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his honorable reappearance, will be merciful and compassionate with the people and the poor, while at the same time he will be strict and rigorous with his senior civil servants and government ministers.

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<sup>1</sup> In the author's valuable work *The Aroma of Mercy*, p40, on the issue of judgment of Imam Mahdi peace be upon him, it is stated: "In numerous narrations it is reported that Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance, would make judgment according to the judicial procedure of Prophet David, meaning that he would judge on the basis of evidence and oath. This is because Prophet David received the commandment from Lord the Almighty to judge by the Truth, and Allah Almighty said in the holy Qur'an, [O Dawood! We have made you a vicegerent on earth, so judge between mankind in truth]38:26. Then Almighty Allah revealed to him, "judge between them on the basis of **evidence** and add My Name to them to **swear an oath to it**" [al-Kafi, vol.7 p415] i.e. in the case where no evidence is available. Therefore, Prophet David was bound to make judgment on the basis of evidence ..."