



**In the Name of Allah,
the Entirely Compassionate,
the Especially Merciful**

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The main value of the research lies in this section, because the research findings are determined, and the researcher's final understanding of the research is expressed. In general, in this section, accurate interpretation of the data and expression of the researcher / researchers view of the findings, comparison of the research findings with the findings of previous researches and the position of the research among similar researches, brief description of the limitations faced by the research and research proposal (s) inferred from research findings are presented.

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The sources used in the article should be based on the method of in-text citation and similar to the examples and templates that are introduced below:

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- 1- Helping to spread the culture of Ahl al-Bayt (as) research in scientific and research centers;
- 2- Promoting and deepening Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and knowledge;
- 3- Promoting and presenting scientific products of Imam Moibn Research Center;
- 4- Publishing an authentic and reference Quarterly with scientific-research validity in the field of Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and education.

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The Journal of Ahl al-Bayt (as) Teachings editor in chief appreciates your good efforts to announcing other staffs and students to cooperate as an article author.

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The Role of the Imam's Knowledge of Languages in Proving Imamate

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Abstract

One of the prominent features in Shi'a traditions regarding the Imams (peace be upon them) is their knowledge of languages and their ability to speak all human languages. This article, employing a descriptive-library approach and utilizing narrative sources and theological texts, examines this characteristic and analyzes its role in proving Imamate. First, the indicators of Imamate from the perspective of Shi'a theology are explained. Then, citing authentic hadiths, the ability of the Imams (peace be upon them) to speak all languages is examined as one of the signs of divinely-inspired knowledge (*'ilm ladunnī*) and their authority (*hujjiyyah*). This characteristic not only demonstrates the vast scope of the Imams' knowledge but also, within the Shi'a epistemological system, serves as evidence of their connection to the source of divine knowledge and their suitability for the office of Imamate.

Keywords: Speech, Divine Proof, Non-Imam, Different Languages, Indicators of Imamate.

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Introduction

Regarding this subject, Mr. Hassan Erfani, in 1997 (1376 AH solar), via two articles published in issues 5 and 6 of the journal *'Ulum-e Hadith*, compiled the hadiths related to the Imams (peace be upon them) speaking different languages. However, the present writing approaches this characteristic differently, examining it not merely as a virtue, but as one of the criteria for recognizing the Imam. The purpose for conducting this research is to explain the role of knowledge of languages in proving Imamate and to analyze its function when facing the crisis of confusion and distinguishing the Imam, whose obedience is obligatory (*Imam al-Muftarad al-Ta'ah*), from claimants to Imamate.

The indicators of Imamate in Shi'a traditions can be divided into two general categories: physical indicators and non-physical indicators.

Hasan ibn al-Jahm said: I was sitting with Abi al-Hasan (Imam Reza, peace be upon him). He called for his young son [Imam Jawad, peace be upon him], seated him on my lap, and told me, "Undress him and remove his shirt." I removed it. He then said, "Look between his shoulders." So I looked, and there, on one of his shoulders, was something like a seal embedded in the flesh. Then he said to me, "Do you see this? My father had the same mark in this same place." Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 321)

In the aforementioned narration, it is clearly stated that the indicators of Imamate are classified into two physical and non-physical¹ categories (Al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, vol. 25, p. 120). The present writing seeks to examine one of the indicators of Imamate that falls under the category of non-physical characteristics.

Statement of the Problem

Statement of the Problem In the theological and narrative framework of Twelver Shi'ism, the Imamate is defined by characteristics that transcend ordinary human capacities. Among the most significant and thought-provoking attributes attributed to the Infallible Imams (peace be upon them) in the traditions (*Hadith*) is their comprehensive knowledge of all human languages and their ability to converse in every tongue. This faculty, which serves as a manifestation of *'Ilm al-Ladunni* (divinely inspired knowledge) and an indication of their connection to the divine source of revelation, has historically been regarded in Shi'i theology as a crucial sign of the Imams' legitimacy (*Hujjiyah*). Despite the significance of this subject in establishing the Imamate, previous studies have primarily adopted a

1. Explanation: It appears that the Imam also has a mark on his body that indicates his Imamate, such as the Seal of Prophethood, and it is possible that it is specific to the two Imams. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 25, p. 120.



descriptive and reportorial approach, focusing predominantly on the collection and classification of relevant traditions. For instance, the works of scholars such as Hassan Erfani (1997) have centered on the gathering and categorization of Hadiths concerning the Imams' linguistic abilities. However, a fundamental question remains: is this ability merely a "personal virtue" or an extraordinary "miracle," or does it possess a specific epistemological function within the theological discourse, particularly in "distinguishing the legitimate, divinely appointed Imam (*Imam al-Muftarad al-Ta'ah*) from false claimants to the Imamate"? In contexts where Islamic societies have faced ideological crises and the emergence of various claimants to the Imamate throughout history, the need for a precise criterion to recognize the true *Hujjah* (God's proof) is an undeniable necessity. The core problem addressed in this study is how the faculty of "speaking in multiple languages" functions as an efficient indicator and a probative criterion for establishing the Imamate and resolving the state of confusion (*Tahayyur*) for seekers of truth. Consequently, by moving beyond a purely descriptive approach, this research aims to elucidate the role of this attribute within the system of Imamology and to investigate its capacity as a primary criterion in the process of identifying and validating the station of the Imamate.

The Importance of Recognizing the Indicators of Imamate

Recognizing the indicators of Imamate has been of such importance among Shi'a traditionists (*muḥaddithūn*) that some of them have dedicated independent chapters to this subject in their hadith works. For instance, the late Al-Kulaynī, in his book *Al-Kāfī*, includes a chapter titled "Chapter on Matters that Necessitate the Proof of the Imam" (Al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 284) – matters which the Infallible Imam must possess. In this chapter, Al-Kulaynī mentions 7 narrations, all of which describe specific qualities exclusive to the Imam (peace be upon him). The late Majlisī, may God have mercy on him, in his *Biḥār al-Anwār*, opened a chapter called "Comprehensive [Chapter] on the Attributes of the Imam and Conditions of Imamate" (Al-Majlisī, 1403 AH, vol. 25, p. 115), in which he transmits 39 hadiths.

The Qualities of Imam in the Works of Traditionists

Shi'a traditionists, in their hadith works, have endeavored to state the indicators of Imamate precisely and with solid documents. This effort indicates the foundational position of Imamate in Shi'a thought and the necessity of correctly recognizing the Infallible Imam. Among these works is the book *Manāqib Āl Abī-Ṭālib* (peace be upon them) by the late Ibn Shahr Āshūb, in which, citing Imamiyya traditions, it is stated: The Imam must possess fifty signs. These signs are a collection of physical,



knowledge-based, moral, and unseen-related characteristics that together prove the Imam's divine authority (*ḥujjiyyah*) and station (Ibn Shahr Āshūb Māzandarānī, 1379 AH, vol. 1, p. 253). The late Al-Ṭabrisī in *Al-Iḥtejāj* (Al-Ṭabrisī, 1403 AH, vol. 2, p. 437) and the late Irbilī in *Kashf al-Ghummah* (Irbilī, 1381 AH, vol. 2, p. 290), and the late Al-Ṣadūq narrate traditions from the blessed presence of Imam Reza (peace be upon him) in which 30 qualities are mentioned for the Imam. A notable point is that the late Al-Ṣadūq narrated this tradition in his books *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Reza*, *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, and *Al-Khiṣāl* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1413 AH, vol. 4, p. 418).

In the tradition attributed to Imam Reza (peace be upon him), which enumerates thirty characteristics for the Imam, there is no explicit mention of the ability to speak different languages. However, this characteristic can be considered as one of the instances of the phrase "the most knowledgeable of people" (*A 'lam al-Nās*), because the Imam's comprehensive knowledge of sciences and cognitions includes mastery over various languages and dialects. From a theological perspective, such an ability is not only a sign of the Imam's divinely-inspired knowledge (*'ilm ladunnī*), but also plays an effective role in proving Imamate and distinguishing the real Imam from false claimants.

The late Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī, in *Al-Kharā'ij*, narrates a hadith from Imam al-Bāqir (peace be upon him) in which 10 qualities are mentioned for the Imam (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 569).

Speaking All Languages as One of the Indicators for Recognizing the Imam

One of the crucial indicators for recognizing the Infallible Imam is their ability to speak different languages; a characteristic presented in Shi'a traditions as a sign of the Imam's all-encompassing knowledge and connection to the source of divine knowledge. This ability serves as a tool to distinguish the real Imam from false claimants, and for this reason, Shi'a traditionists have paid special attention to it. Thus, they have dedicated independent chapters to this subject in their hadith works; such that this characteristic is considered in narrative sources as one of the criteria for the Imam's authority (*ḥujjiyyah*). The late Al-Ṣaffār, in his book *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, has a chapter titled "Chapter on the Imams (peace be upon them) Speaking All Languages" (Al-Ṣaffār, 1404 AH, vol. 1, p. 333). In this chapter, he narrates 15 hadiths. He has another chapter titled "Chapter on the Imams (peace be upon them) Knowing All Languages" (Ibid., 1404 AH, vol. 1, p. 337), in which he narrates 7 hadiths.



It seems the difference between the two chapters opened by the late Al-Ṣaffār in his hadith work ¹(Ibid., 1404 AH, vol. 1, p. 333) lies in the type of interaction the Infallible Imam (peace be upon him) has had with different languages. In the first chapter, narrations are cited that indicate the Imam (peace be upon him) could speak various languages; meaning the Imam actively and verbally spoke to different people in their language. However, in the second chapter, the focus of the hadiths is on Imam's understanding and comprehending the meanings of different words and languages, without necessarily uttering a word of that language. This distinction indicates the different levels of the Imam's knowledge regarding languages and also the extent of their understanding and communication with diverse audiences. Or, the late Shaykh al-Mufīd, in his book *Al-Ikhtisāṣ*, has a chapter titled "Knowledge of the Imams (peace be upon them) of All Languages, the Language of Birds, and Other Animals" (Al-Mufīd, 1413 AH, p. 289). Similarly, the late Majlisī, in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, has a chapter titled "That They (peace be upon them) Know All Tongues and Languages and Speak with Them" (Majlisī, 1403 AH, vol. 26, p. 190). 'Allāmah Majlisī narrates 7 hadiths in this chapter.

A noteworthy point in the chapter division of the late 'Allāmah Majlisī, unlike the approach of the late Al-Ṣaffār in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, is that he gathered the hadiths related to the Imam's ability to comprehend and speak different languages into a single chapter. This approach suggests that the late Majlisī considered both types of Imam's interaction (verbal and perceptual) under a single general heading related to the Imam's knowledge of various languages, whereas Al-Ṣaffār maintained a structural distinction between these two categories of narrations.

Sources for the Imam Speaking Different Languages

The first source that mentions the characteristic in question is the late Al-Ḥumayrī in his book *Qurb al-Isnād* (Al-Ḥumayrī, 1413 AH, p. 339).

He speaks to people in every language

The same narration is transmitted by the late Al-Kulaynī (Al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 285) and the late Al-Ṣadūq in *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār* (Bābawayh, 1403 AH, p. 102) as [He speaks to people in every tongue and language]. The late Al-Mufīd in *Al-Irshād* (Al-Mufīd, 1413 AH, vol. 2, p. 224), the late Al-Ṭabarī in *Dalā'il al-Imāmah* (Al-Ṭabarī al-Āmulī al-Ṣaghīr, 1413 AH, p. 337), and the late Al-Ṭabrisī in *A'lām al-Warā* (Al-Ṭabrisī, 1390 AH, p. 304) also transmit it.

1. "Chapter on the Imams (peace be upon them) that they speak all languages" and "Chapter on the Imams (peace be upon them) that they know all languages".



Documentation (Isnād) of the Narration

The difference among the transmissions found in sources like *Qurb al-Isnād*, *Al-Kāfi*, and *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār* is that each of these narrations is transmitted through a different chain of transmission (*sanad*) and from a different Imam. The narration in *Qurb al-Isnād* is transmitted from Imam al-Kāzīm (peace be upon him), the narration in *Al-Kāfi* from Imam Reza (peace be upon him), and the narration in *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār* from Imam al-Bāqir (peace be upon him). Furthermore, the chain of transmission used by Shaykh al-Mufid in *Al-Irshād* matches the chain of the narration in *Al-Kāfi*. On the other hand, the chain (of transmission) used by the late Al-Ṭabarī in *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā* leads to Abū Baṣīr, who is the same narrator of the *Al-Kāfi* tradition, but his method of transmission differs from that of Al-Kulaynī. In contrast, the chain (of transmission) used by the late Al-Ṭabarī in *Dalā'il al-Imāmah* is completely identical to the chain of Al-Kulaynī in *Al-Kāfi*.

Hadiths of the Imams (peace be upon them) Speaking Different Languages

Abū Baṣīr said: I said to Abi al-Hasan (Imam Reza, peace be upon him), "May I be your ransom, by what [qualities] is the Imam recognized?" He replied, "By several qualities: (Al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 285, hadith 7, al-Islamiyyah ed.)

1. By something that has preceded from his father regarding him - like an explicit saying about him and granting him knowledge of Imamate -, so that it may be a proof for his Imamte.
2. He answers any question he is asked. and if they remain silent in front of him, he initiates speaking.
3. He can tell about tomorrow.
4. He can speak to people around the world in any language, and people of any language can converse with him without a translator.

Then the Imam (peace be upon him) said to me:

"O Abā Moḥammad! Verily, the speech of no one is hidden from the Imam – neither the speech of birds, nor beasts, nor any creature that has a soul. Whoever does not possess these qualities is not an Imam."

According to the aforementioned hadith, one of the indicators for recognizing the Imam and the successor (*Waṣī*) of the Prophet (may God bless him and his family) is his ability to speak all the languages and dialects of the world. Therefore, the following narrations are mentioned which indicate that the Imams (peace be upon them) spoke different languages:



1. Persian Language

Then Imam said to me. O Abū Baṣīr said I will give you a sign before you stand. There it did not take us long that a man from Khurāsān entered and spoke to him (Imam Musā ibn Ja'far, peace be upon him) in Arabic. Abū al-Hasan (Imam Reza? Note: The chain mentions Abi al-Hasan, but the context often refers to Imam Kāzīm here. The text identifies him as Musā ibn Ja'far) answered him in Persian. The Khurāsānī man said: "By God, may I be your ransom, nothing prevented me from speaking to you in Khurāsānī except that I thought you did not know it well." The Imam said: "Glory be to God! If I do not know it well enough to answer you, then what is my superiority over you?" (Al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 285).

A group of people from Khurāsān entered upon Imam al-Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). Before they could ask anything, he said in Arabic: "Whoever amasses wealth and guards it, God will punish him in proportion to it." They said in Persian: "We do not understand Arabic." The Imam (peace be upon him) said in Persian: (Whoever hoards dirhams, his punishment is Hell). Then he said: "Indeed, God created two cities, one in the East and the other in the West. Upon each city is a wall of iron containing a million doors of gold, each door with two leaves. In each city are seventy thousand people of different languages. I know all those languages, what is in them, and what is between them. There is no proof [of God] besides me, my fathers, and my sons after me." (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 753).

The Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Alī, peace be upon him) said to her (the daughter of Yazdegerd): "What is your name?" She said: "Shāh Zanān, daughter of *Kisrā*." The Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) said in Persian: (Shāh Zanān is none except the daughter of Mohammad), "She is the Sayyidah of women. You are *Shahr-bānūyah*, and your sister is *Murwārīd*, daughter of *Kisrā*." She said: "آریه" (Yes). (Al-Ṭabarī al-Āmulī al-Ṣaghīr, 1413 AH, p. 196)

2. Turkish Language

Ibn Farqad said: I was with Abī 'Abd Allāh (Imam al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him) when a non-Arab slave boy came with a message. He kept stammering and expressing himself poorly, such that I thought he was annoying [the Imam]. The Imam said to him: "Speak in any language you know well, other than Arabic, since you do not know it well, for I understand." So he spoke to him in Turkish, and he (the Imam) answered him back in his language. The slave boy left astonished. (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 759).



3. Nabatean (Nabaṭī) Language

Narratives on Ja‘far al-Şādiq’s Use of Nabataean Language.

A: It is narrated that ‘Alī (peace be upon him) came across Ḥasan al-Baṣrī who was performing ablution (wuḍū‘) from a small stream. The Imam (peace be upon him) said: "Perform your purification thoroughly, O ‘Laftā’!" Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "Yesterday, you killed men who used to perform ablution thoroughly!" The Imam (peace be upon him) said: "Are you grieving for them?" He said: "Yes." The Imam said: "May God prolong your grief." Ayyūb al-Sijistānī said: "We never saw Ḥasan al-Baṣrī except grieving, as if he were returning from the burial of a dear one... I spoke to him about it, and he said: "It is the result of that righteous man’s curse upon me". ‘Laftā’ in Nabatean means ‘devil.’ Ḥasan al-Baṣrī’s mother had named him that and used to call him by this name during his childhood, and no one knew this until ‘Alī (peace be upon him) called him by it. (Ibid., 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 547).

B. Mohammad ibn Abd al-Jabbar narrated to us on the authority of Abu Abd Allah al-Barqī, on the authority of Fadala ibn Ayyub, on the authority of a man from the Masami’a whose name was Misma’ and whose nickname was Kirdin, on the authority of Abu Abd Allah (peace be upon him). The narrator stated: "I was in the presence of Ja‘far al-Şādiq (peace be upon him), and his son Ismā‘īl was also present. At that time, we regarded Ismā‘īl as the imam after his father. During a lengthy account, he said that he had heard from a man that Ja‘far al-Şādiq had made a statement contradicting our belief in Ismā‘īl’s imamate. I went to two individuals from Kufa who considered Ismā‘īl the imam and informed them of this matter. One of them said: 'I hear and obey my imam, and I am satisfied with this command.' The other tore his collar and said: 'No, by God, I will neither hear nor obey, nor am I satisfied, unless I hear it directly from the Imam himself.'

(Safar, 1404 AH, Vol.1, P.339).

He went toward the house of Ja‘far al-Şādiq, and I followed him. When we reached the door, we sought permission. He permitted me to enter before the other. Then he granted the Kufan permission to enter. When the latter entered, the Imam said: 'O so-and-so, would you like a private letter to be sent to each of you? What so-and-so said is correct.'

The man replied: 'I wish to hear it from you directly.' The Imam then said: 'So-and-so (meaning Mūsā ibn Ja‘far) is your imam after me. Whoever claims imamate after him is a liar.' At that moment, I noticed that the Kufan man, who was well-versed in the Nabataean language, said to me: 'Dharaqa.' Ja‘far al-Şādiq had said 'Dharaqa' — which in Nabataean means 'Take delivery. Yes, take delivery.' We then took leave of the Imam."



C: 'Ammār al-Sābātī narrated: Imam al-Šādiq (peace be upon him) addressed me in Nabataean, saying: "*O 'Ammār, Abū Muslim fa-zallalahu fa-kasāhu fa-kasāhahu bi-sāṭūrā.*" 'Ammār said: I told him, "I have never seen any Nabataean more eloquent in the Nabataean language than you." The Imam (peace be upon him) replied: "O 'Ammār, it is the same with all languages." (Safar, 1404 AH, Vol.1, P.333).

D: The Imam (peace be upon him) said: When the Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Alī, peace be upon him) was advancing toward the Khawārij of Nahrawān, he halted in a district called Qaṭuftā. The people of the Bādaryawā region came to him and complained about the heaviness of their land tax (*kharāj*). They said to him in the Nabataean language that they had neighbors whose lands were larger yet their tax was lighter. Imam 'Alī (peace be upon him) responded in Nabataean: "*Wa-gharzuṭā min 'ūdyā*" — meaning: "Truly, a short rajaz (poetic meter) is better than a long rajaz." (Safar, 1404 AH, Vol.1, P.335).

In Al-Manāqib, Ibn Shahr Āshūb records the following phrase instead of the above:

"*Zi'r awṭā'ihī min zi'r arbāh*" (Ibn Shahr Āshūb al-Māzandarānī, 1379 AH, vol. 2, p. 56) — meaning: "A small amount of smoke is better than a large amount of smoke."

4. Indian (Hindī) Language

A. Abū Hāshim al-Ja'farī said: I entered upon Abī al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him), and he spoke to me in Indian (Hindī). I could not reply to him properly. Before him was a leather bag (*rakwah*) full of pebbles. He took a single pebble, placed it in his mouth, and sucked it for a while. Then he tossed it to me, and I placed it in my mouth. By God, I had not left his presence before I could speak seventy-three tongues, the first of which was Indian (Hindī). (Ibn Ḥamzah al-Ṭūsī, 1419 AH, p. 533)

B. Suddenly, a man came to me and said: "Respond to your master!" He kept taking me through various places until he entered me into a house and a garden. There I saw my master (Imam al-'Askarī, peace be upon him) seated. When he looked at me, he spoke to me in Indian (Hindī), greeted me, informed me of my name, and asked me about forty men, one by one, by their names. (Ibn Bābawayh, 1395 AH, vol. 2, p. 439)

C. Abū Hāshim said: I went to serve Imam al-Hādī (peace be upon him), and he spoke to me in Indian (Hindī). I could not answer him properly. At that moment, the Imam (peace be upon him) took a pebble from a leather bag full of pebbles, put it in his mouth, and sucked it. Then he gave it to me, and I put it in my mouth. By God, I had not left his service before I could speak seventy-three tongues, the first of which was Indian (Hindī). (Al-Ṭabrisī, 1390 AH, p. 360)



5. Nubian (Nūbī) Language

a. It is narrated from al-Reza (peace be upon him) who said: My father, Mūsā (peace be upon him), told al-Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-‘Alā: "Buy me a Nubian¹ slave girl." Al-Ḥusayn said: "By God, I know a precious Nubian slave girl, the best I have seen from Nubia. Were it not for one characteristic, she would be suitable for you." The Imam (peace be upon him) asked: "What is that characteristic?" He said: "She does not understand your speech, and you do not understand her speech." The Imam smiled and said: "Go and buy her." He did so. (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 1, p. 310)

When I brought her to him, the Imam asked her in her language: "What is your name?" She said: "*Mu’Nisáh*." He said: "By my life, you are Mu’Nisáh (the companionable one). But you had another name before this; your name previously was Ḥabībah (the beloved one)." She said: "You have spoken the truth."

6. Zuttī (Language of the Zutt people) [^6]

a. On the authority of Abī Ja’far (Imam al-Bāqir, peace be upon him) who said: When ‘Alī (peace be upon him) had finished fighting the people of Basra, seventy men from the Zutt (a people of Indian/African origin) came to him, greeted him, and spoke to him in their tongue. He answered them in their tongue and said to them: "I am not as you say. I am a created servant of God." But they refused [to accept this] and said to him: "You are He (i.e., God)." He said to them: "If you do not recant what you have said about me and repent to God Almighty, I will kill you." They refused to recant or repent. So he ordered that wells be dug for them. They were dug. Then he connected some of them to others, threw them into them, sealed their tops, and then ignited a fire in one of the wells that had no one in it. The smoke entered upon them, and they died. (Al-Kashshī, 1409 AH, p. 109)

7. Sindhi (Sindī) Language [^7]

A. The Catholikos (Jāthalīq) said: "O son of Moḥammad, there is a Sindhi man here, a Christian, proficient in debate and speech in Sindhi." The Imam (al-Reza, peace be upon him) said to him: "Bring him to me." He brought him. The Imam spoke with him in Sindhi, then began to debate and move him step by step in Christianity, all in Sindhi. We heard the Sindhi man say: "Thabaṭī, thabaṭī, thabaṭlah." Al-Reza (peace be upon him) said: "He has declared God's oneness in Sindhi." Then he spoke to him about Jesus and Mary. He kept elevating him from one state to another until he said in Sindhi: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that



1 . Nubia: It was the name of a tribe in Sudan.

Moḥammad is the Messenger of Allah." Then he raised a belt he was wearing, and underneath appeared a zunnār (a sacred thread worn by Christians and Zoroastrians) around his waist. He said: "O son of the Messenger of Allah, cut it off with your own hand." Al-Reza (peace be upon him) called for a knife and cut it. Then he said to Moḥammad ibn al-Faḍl al-Hāshimī: "Take the Sindhi man to the bathhouse, purify him, clothe him and his family, and take them all to Medina." (Ibn Ḥamzah al-Ṭūsī, 1419 AH, p. 194)

B. Abū Ismā'īl al-Sindī said: I heard in Sind that God has a proof (ḥujjah) among the Arabs. So I left that place in search. I was directed to al-Reza (peace be upon him), so I headed to him and entered upon him while I did not know a single word of Arabic. I greeted him in Sindhi. He returned my greeting in my language. I began speaking to him in Sindhi, and he answered me in it. I said: "I heard in Sind that God has a proof among the Arabs, so I set out in search." He said: "That has reached me. Yes, I am he." Then he said: "Ask what you wish." So I asked him what I wanted. When I wanted to leave his presence, I said: "I do not know any Arabic. Supplicate to God to inspire me with it so I may speak it with its people." He passed his hand over my lips, and I spoke Arabic from that moment. (Irbilī, 1381 AH, vol. 2, p. 304)

C. Abū Ismā'īl al-Sindī said: (Al-Ḥamawī, 1995 CE, vol. 3, p. 267) I was in Sind when I heard that God has a proof among the Arabs... until he said: "I entered upon him (Imam al-Reza, peace be upon him) while I did not know a single word of Arabic. So I greeted him in Sindhi, and he returned my greeting in my language. I began speaking to him in Sindhi, and he answered me in Sindhi." (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 1, p. 340)

D. Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Washshā' said: One day I entered upon 'Alī al-Reza ibn Mūsā (peace be upon him) and saw a group of people with him whom I had not seen and did not know. He was addressing them in Sindhi. (Al-Khaṣṣībī, 1419 AH, p. 316)

E. Ḥakīmah, the daughter of Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) and paternal aunt of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askarī (peace be upon him), used to visit Imam al-'Askarī and pray that God would grant him a son. Ḥakīmah said: One day, I went to Imam al-'Askarī and prayed for him as I had previously done. The Imam said to me: "Tonight—which is the middle of Sha'bān in the year 255 AH—the child we have been awaiting will be born. Stay with us tonight to break your fast." That night was a Friday night. I asked: "From whom will this child be?" He replied: "From your maid, Narjis." Ḥakīmah Khatun said: Among all the maids, none was dearer to me than Narjis Khatun. Whenever I entered the house, Narjis would greet me, kiss my hand, and remove my shoes with her own hands. When I went



to Narjis, she performed the same acts she always did. I embraced Narjis, kissed her, and prevented her from doing more. She then addressed me in the Sindhi language, and I replied to her in Sindhi¹ as well. (Al-Mas'ūdī, 1426 AH, p. 258).

8. Greek Language

A. Know, O Mufaḍḍal, that the name of this world in the current Greek language, well-known among them, is "Qūsmūs" (Cosmos), and its interpretation is "ornament." The philosophers and those claiming wisdom named it thus. (Mufaḍḍal ibn 'Umar, 1379 AH solar, p. 176).

9. Hebrew ('Ibrānī) Language

A. Then al-Hārūnī took out a book written in Hebrew from his sleeve and gave it to 'Alī (peace be upon him). 'Alī (peace be upon him) looked into it and wept. Al-Hārūnī said to him: "What makes you weep?" 'Alī (peace be upon him) said: "O Hārūnī, my name is written in this." He said: "O 'Alī, read your name, which place is it written in? For this is a book in Hebrew, and you are an Arab man?!" 'Alī (peace be upon him) said: "Woe to you, O Hārūnī! This is my name. In the Torah, my name is Hābīl, and in the Gospel, Ḥaydar." The Jew said to him: "You have spoken the truth. By the One besides Whom there is no god, this is the handwriting of my father Hārūn, dictated by Mūsā ibn 'Imrān (Moses). It was inherited by the fathers until it came to me." (Al-Jawharī al-Baṣrī, n.d., p. 17)

B. From Umm al-Miqdām al-Thaqafīyyah... Juwayriyyah bint Musharrah told me: "We were crossing the bridge of *Ṣirāt*² with the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Alī, (peace be upon him) at the time of the afternoon prayer ('Aṣr). The Imam said: 'This is a land upon which punishment has descended. It is not appropriate for a prophet or the legatee (waṣī) of a prophet to pray here. However, any of you who wishes to pray here, may do so.' The people scattered to the right and left and began praying. I said to myself: 'By God, today I will imitate this master in my prayer; I will not pray until he prays.' (Ibn Bābawayh, 1385 AH solar, vol. 2, p. 352)

"So I continued travelling with him. Gradually, the sun began to set, and I grew very anxious because I had not yet prayed and the time was running out. Then the sun set, and we continued on our way. The Imam said: 'O Juwayriyyah, give the *adhān* (call to prayer).' I said: 'You ask me to give the *adhān* while the sun has already set?!' He said: 'Give the *adhān*.'

1. In the narration of Ithbat al-Wasiyyah: p. 258, instead of Bissinidi "in the Sindhi language", it is reported as Bissiyadah which means 'she received me with a high degree of authority'. In this case, it would be excluded from our example.

2. The Sirat is a river in Iraq, and some copies of the dictionary state: It is a river in the Euphrates.



So I gave the *adhān*. Then he said to me: 'Give the *iqāmah*.' So I gave the *iqāmah*. As soon as I said '*qad qāmati al-ṣalāh*', I saw the Imam's blessed lips move, and I heard him utter something that sounded like Hebrew. Immediately, the sun rose until it reached the position it occupies at the time of the *ʿAṣr* prayer. "The Imam performed the *ʿAṣr* prayer. When we had finished praying, the sun went back down to its setting position, and the stars appeared in the sky. I said: 'I bear witness that you are indeed the legatee of the Messenger of God.' The Imam said: 'O Juwayriyyah, have you not heard God Almighty say: "So glorify the name of your Lord, the Most Great" (Sūrah Wāqī'ah, 56:74).

'I said: 'Yes, I have heard it.' He said: 'I asked God by His Great and Mighty Name, and He turned the sun back for me.'"

10. Roman (Rūmī) Language

A. It is narrated from Dāwūd ibn Farqad who said: The killing of al-Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) and the matter of his son being taken to Syria were mentioned in the presence of Abī 'Abd Allāh (Imam al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him). He (the Imam) said: "When he (Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn) entered the prison, one of those present said to another, 'How beautiful is the construction of this wall!' On it was an inscription in Roman (Rūmī). 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) read it. The Romans whispered among themselves, saying, 'Among these prisoners, no one is more worthy of avenging the blood of the slain one (al-Ḥusayn) than this one,' meaning 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn.'" (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 754)

B. Al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib (peace be upon him) testified for his father, 'Alī (peace be upon him), and his testimony was swift. 'Alī (peace be upon him) said in Roman (Rūmī): "Tālūn wa Qālūn," meaning "good." (Ibn al-Ash'ath, Al-Ja'fariyyāt, 1409 AH, p. 142)

C. He (Imam al-Reza) returned to that gathering. They brought him a Roman slave girl. He spoke to her in Roman (Rūmī), while the Catholikos listened, as he understood Roman. Al-Reza (peace be upon him) said to her in Roman: "Which one is more beloved to you, Moḥammad or Jesus?" She said: "Previously, before I knew Moḥammad, Jesus was more beloved to me. But after I came to know Moḥammad, I love him more than Jesus and the other prophets." (Ibn al-Ash'ath, Al-Ja'fariyyāt, 1409 AH, p. 347)

D. He said: "Indeed, Mūsā ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) lived for a period of time, speaking to the Nabateans¹ in their language, to the people of Khurāsān in Persian (Dariyyah), to the Romans in Roman (Rūmī), and to the non-Arabs in their own languages." (Al-Rāwandī, 1409 AH, vol. 1, p. 351)

1. Nabat: A non-Arab tribe who lived in a place between Arab Iraq and Non-Arab Iraq.



11. Abyssinian Language

It is narrated from Ibn Abī Ḥamzah, who said: I was in the presence of the seventh Imam (peace be upon him) when thirty slaves purchased from Abyssinia (Ethiopia) were brought in. One of them spoke, and his speech was eloquent. The seventh Imam (peace be upon him) replied to him in the Abyssinian (Ge'ez/Ethiopian Semitic) language. That slave was astonished, and all the slaves were amazed, for they had assumed that the Imam (peace be upon him) did not understand their language. The Imam (peace be upon him) then said to him: "I will give you some money; you are to pay each of the slaves thirty dirhams." The slaves went out, and some of them said to others: "He speaks our language more fluently than we do. This is a blessing from God upon us." (Himyari, 1413 AH, p. 336)

‘Alī ibn Ḥamzah said: When the slaves had left, I said: "O son of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), I have seen you speaking with the Abyssinians in their own language." He replied: "Yes." I said: "Yet you gave instructions only to that one slave." He replied: "Yes, I instructed him to treat his companions kindly and to pay each of them thirty dirhams monthly. From his speech, it became clear that he is the most knowledgeable among them. He is one of the sons of kings. Therefore, I appointed him over them and recommended him to attend to their needs. Moreover, he is an honest and upright slave."

Then the Imam said: "Perhaps you are amazed at my speaking to them in Abyssinian?" I said: "Yes, by God, I am." He said: "Do not be amazed. What remains hidden from you of my work is even more amazing and astonishing. What you have heard is nothing more than a bird taking a drop of water from the sea with its beak. Do you think that one drop diminishes the water of the sea?" The Imam (peace be upon him) continued: "The Imam is like the ocean; what he possesses never ends, and his wonders are greater than the wonders of the ocean."

12. Saqālibah (Slavic) Language

A. ‘Alī ibn Mahziyār said: I sent my slave boy, who was a Saqlabī (Slavic), to Abī al-Ḥasan al-Thālith (Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him). The slave boy returned to me amazed. I said to him, "What is the matter, my son?" He said, "How can I not be amazed? He kept speaking to me in Saqlābī (Slavic) as if he were one of us..."

I thought that by speaking in this language, he wanted the slaves not to hear what was being said between them. (Al-Mufīd, 1413 AH, p. 289)

13. Khazar (Khazarī) Language

A. Al-Rashīd had ordered his servants... When he (Imam al-Kāzīm, peace be upon him) understood what they intended, he spoke to them in Khazarī and Turkish. They threw down the knives from their hands, jumped



to his feet, kissed them, and pleaded to him. (Ibn Shahr Āshūb Māzandarānī, 1379 AH, vol. 4, p. 301)

14. Chinese (Şīnī) Language

A. Ishāq ibn ‘Ammār said: I entered upon Mūsā ibn Ja‘far (peace be upon him) and sat with him. Suddenly, a man from Khurāsān sought permission to enter and spoke to him in speech the like of which I had never heard; it sounded like the speech of birds. Ishāq said: The Imam (peace be upon him) answered him with the same kind of speech and in his language... I said: "I have never heard speech like this!" He said: "This is the speech of a group of people from China. Not all Chinese speak like this... Do you marvel at my speaking to him in his language? I will tell you what is more amazing: The Imam knows the language of birds and the speech of every living creature created by God, and nothing is hidden from the Imam." (Ibn Ḥamzah al-Ṭūsī, 1419 AH, p. 462) and (Al-Majlisī, 1403 AH, vol. 48, p. 70)

The Imams (peace be upon them) Speaking Different Languages

1. Abū Ḥamzah Nuşayr the servant said: I heard Abā Moḥammad (Imam al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him) many times speaking to his servants in their languages – Turkish, Roman, and Slavic. I was amazed by this and said to myself: "He was born in Medina and did not appear to anyone until after Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Hādī) passed away, and no one saw him. How is this?" While I was thinking this, he turned to me and said: "Indeed, God, blessed and exalted, distinguishes His proof (*ḥujjah*) from the rest of His creation in every way. He gives him languages, knowledge of lineages, lifespans, and events. Were it not for that, there would be no difference between the proof and the one for whom the proof is established." (Al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 509)

Conclusion

In Shi'a narrations, specific characteristics and qualities have been introduced to distinguish the Infallible Imam from claimants to Imamate. Among these is the Imam's ability to speak all languages. An examination of the relevant hadiths shows that the Imams (peace be upon them), in various situations, spoke different languages, including Roman, Persian, Abyssinian, Nabatean, and Greek. This ability not only served the purpose of responding to audiences from different ethnicities and languages but was also used as evidence for the truth of their Imamate. Such a characteristic indicates the Imams' all-encompassing knowledge and his connection to the source of divine knowledge. Within the Shi'a theological system, it is considered one of the criteria for distinguishing the true Imam from false claimants.



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**Mahdism in the Qur'an and Sunnah:
Foundations and the Perspectives of Sunni Scholars**

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Abstract

Belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdī (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is reflected not only in Shi'ī theological and hadith sources, but also extensively in the most authoritative Sunni references, particularly the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* (the Six Canonical Collections). Employing a descriptive–analytical method, the present study examines the status of Imam al-Mahdī (AJ) in the Qur'an and Sunni sources. Drawing upon the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*, as well as Sunni hadith, historical, and theological works, the study elucidates the Qur'anic and narrational foundations of Mahdism, the lineage and identity of Imam al-Mahdī (AJ), his universal government, the descent of Prophet Jesus (‘Īsā), the signs of reappearance, and the viewpoints of Sunni scholars regarding him. Through an analysis of the traditions concerning Mahdism found in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, this study demonstrates that the essential belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdī (AJ), his affiliation with the Prophet's Household (Ahl al-Bayt), his descent from Lady Fāṭimah (peace be upon her), the establishment of a universal government of justice, and the occurrence of the signs of reappearance are among the issues accepted by many Sunni traditionists and theologians. The findings of this study indicate that Mahdism, beyond its theological significance, possesses important social, civilizational, and unifying dimensions within the Muslim world. As one of the most significant shared beliefs among Muslims, it can serve as a basis for rapprochement among Islamic schools of thought and for strengthening hope in a future founded upon universal justice.

Keywords: Imam al-Mahdī (AJ), Mahdism, Ahl al-Sunnah, *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*, Reappearance, Ahl al-Bayt (as), Qur'anic Verses on Mahdism, Traditions of Mahdism.

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Introduction

The doctrine of Mahdism constitutes one of the most fundamental beliefs in Islam and represents one of the most significant shared doctrinal principles among Muslim schools of thought. The belief in the advent of a divinely guided savior at the end of history is deeply rooted not only in Shi'ī thought, but also in the authoritative hadith, exegetical, and historical sources of Ahl al-Sunnah. The doctrine of Mahdism embodies humanity's ultimate hope for the establishment of universal justice, the eradication of oppression, the revival of divine values, and the full realization of motheistic governance throughout the world.

Islamic sources contain numerous traditions concerning Imam al-Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance), addressing subjects such as his lineage, personal characteristics, governing conduct, signs of reappearance, companions, the scope of his universal rule, and the descent of Prophet Jesus (ʿĪsā, peace be upon him). A considerable number of these narrations are recorded in the most authoritative Sunni collections—particularly the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*—to such an extent that many Sunni traditionists and theologians have regarded the narrations concerning Mahdism as *mutawātir* (mass-transmitted) and have considered belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) to be among the definitive doctrines of Islam.

The significance of this issue has become even more pronounced in the contemporary era, as today's world faces crises such as injustice, war, extremism, moral disintegration, and the hegemonic ambitions of global powers. In this context, the doctrine of Mahdism may serve as an inspiring paradigm for the pursuit of justice, social hope, and the unity of the Islamic Ummah. On the other hand, certain contemporary intellectual movements have attempted to portray belief in Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) as an exclusively Shi'ī doctrine or to cast doubt upon the authenticity of the traditions related to him. However, a careful examination of Sunni sources demonstrates that the principle of Mahdism has been widely accepted by many leading Sunni scholars throughout Islamic history.

Using a descriptive–analytical approach, the present study investigates the status of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) in authoritative Sunni sources. It seeks, through an analysis of the narrations contained in the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* and other hadith and theological works, to elucidate the perspectives of Sunni scholars regarding the lineage, universal government, signs of reappearance, and identity of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). Furthermore, this study demonstrates that Mahdism, beyond its theological dimension, possesses significant social, civilizational, and unifying functions within the Muslim world.



Statement of the Problem

The issue of Mahdism and belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) constitutes one of the most important doctrinal teachings of Islam and one of the most influential subjects in Islamic religious thought. Although the principle of the appearance of the eschatological savior has been extensively discussed in authoritative Islamic sources—both Shi'i and Sunni—certain contemporary intellectual and Salafi movements have sought to portray this belief as exclusively Shi'i in nature or to question the authenticity of the traditions concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). Such claims are advanced despite the fact that the most authoritative Sunni hadith collections, including the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*, contain numerous narrations regarding the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his lineage, the establishment of a universal government of justice, the descent of Prophet Jesus (as), and the signs of reappearance.

Moreover, many Sunni traditionists, exegetes, and theologians have not only accepted the doctrine of Mahdism, but have also authored independent works concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and regarded the traditions related to him as *mutawātir*. This demonstrates that Mahdism constitutes an inseparable component of the doctrinal heritage of the Islamic world and is not confined to any particular school of thought.

Accordingly, the principal question of the present study is how the status of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) has been articulated in authoritative Sunni sources—especially the *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*—and what perspectives Sunni scholars have adopted regarding his lineage, identity, universal government, and the signs of his reappearance. Furthermore, this study seeks to demonstrate how belief in Mahdism can serve, as one of the most important shared doctrinal principles among Muslims, as a foundation for Islamic unity, social hope, and the pursuit of justice throughout the Muslim world.

Chapter One: The Doctrinal Foundations of Mahdism in the Qur'an and Sunnah

1–1. Mahdism: A Deep-Rooted Doctrine in the Divine Religions

Belief in the advent of the Promised Savior is not exclusive to the Shi'i school; rather, it is one of the fundamental commonalities among the divine religions and major human traditions. The doctrine of salvation in the end times is discussed in the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, each speaking in its own way of the appearance of a divinely guided figure who will fill the earth with justice and equity. In Islam as well, the principle of Mahdism is regarded as one of the definitive and *mutawātir* doctrines, and numerous narrations concerning it have been transmitted in both Shi'i and Sunni sources.



Although the Noble Qur'an does not explicitly mention the name of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), many Qur'anic verses indicate the rule of the righteous, the inheritance of the earth by the believers, and the supremacy of the divine religion over all other religions. Shi'i exegetes, along with a number of Sunni commentators, have interpreted these verses as referring to the universal government of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

1–2. Qur'anic Foundations of Mahdism

A) The Inheritance of the Earth by the Righteous

God Almighty states in Surat al-Anbiyā': "And indeed We wrote in the Psalms after the Reminder that My righteous servants shall inherit the earth" (Qur'an 21:105).

This verse conveys the definite divine promise concerning the ultimate rule of the righteous over the earth. Many exegetes, including al-Tabari, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, al-Qurtubi, and al-Alusi, have regarded this verse as referring to the future course of history and the governance of the righteous. In the narrations of Ahl al-Bayt (as), this verse has also been interpreted as referring to the rule of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

B) The Succession of the Believers on Earth

God states in Surat al-Nur: "Allah has promised those among you who believe and perform righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession upon the earth..." (Qur'an 24:55).

This verse expresses the promise of the global rule of the believers and the realization of complete religious security. Many Muslim exegetes maintain that the full realization of this promise has not yet occurred and will be fulfilled during the era of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

C) The Supremacy of the True Religion over All Religions

In three passages of the Noble Qur'an, it is stated:

"It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions..." (Qur'an 9:33; 48:28; 61:9).

The complete triumph of Islam over all religions has not yet been fully realized. For this reason, many exegetes have considered the ultimate fulfillment of this divine promise to occur during the era of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

D) The Establishment of Global Security

Regarding the future of the believers, the Noble Qur'an states:

"They shall worship Me and associate nothing with Me" (Qur'an 24:55).

This verse describes a monotheistic, secure, and just society which, according to the narrations, will be realized during the period of the universal government of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).



E) The Victory of Islam over Other Religions

The Noble Qur'an states: "It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may detest it" (Qur'an 9:33).

In his Tafsir, al-Qurtubi writes: "The victory of Islam over all other religions will occur at the time of the uprising of al-Mahdi (AJ). At that time, people will either embrace Islam or pay the jizyah. The claim that the Mahdi is the same as Jesus is incorrect, because authentic and mutawātir reports have established that the Mahdi is from the family of the Prophet (PBUH) ..." (al-Qurtubi, vol. 8, p. 111).

Likewise, in al-Bayan, in the commentary on this verse, it is stated: "The one through whom God will make the religion prevail over all other religions is the Mahdi from the descendants of Fatimah." (Al-Shablanji, 1409 AH: p. 343).

Furthermore, Kashf al-Asrar, one of the authoritative Sunni commentaries, states regarding this verse: "The Messenger mentioned in this verse is Mohammad (pbuh), the guidance refers to the Qur'an and faith, and the religion of truth is Islam. God shall grant this religion superiority over all other religions, such that no religion shall remain except that Islam will prevail over it. This event will occur in the future and has not yet been realized." (Maybudi, vol. 4, p. 119).

F) Baqiyyat Allah Is Best for All People

The Noble Qur'an states: "Baqiyyat Allah is better for you, if you are believers" (Qur'an 11:86).

In Nur al-Absar, it is narrated: "When al-Mahdi (AJ) appears, he will make the Ka'bah his base, and 313 of his companions will join him. Then, in his first address, he will recite this verse: 'Baqiyyat Allah is better for you, if you are believers.' Thereafter he will say: 'I am the Baqiyyat Allah, the vicegerent of God, and His proof over you.'" (Al-Shablanji, 1409 AH: p. 349).

1–3. The Hadith Foundations of Mahdism in the Prophetic Sunnah

The narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) are highly abundant in Sunni sources, and many Sunni scholars have regarded the traditions on Mahdism as mutawātir. Among them are the following:

"If there remained only one day from the life of this world, Allah would prolong that day until He raises a man from my household..." (Sunan Abi Dawud, hadith no. 4282).

"The Mahdi is from my progeny, from the descendants of Fatimah." (Sunan Abi Dawud, hadith no. 4284).

"He will fill the earth with justice and equity just as it had been filled with oppression and tyranny." (Al-Mustadrak of al-Hakim, vol. 4, p. 557).



“How will you be when the son of Mary descends while your Imam is from among yourselves?” (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 205; Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, p. 136).

In some Sunni narrations, reference is also made to the role of people from the East in preparing the ground for the government of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). The Messenger of God (pbuh) said: “A people shall emerge from the East and prepare the ground for the rule of the Mahdi.” (Ibn Majah, *ibid.*, hadith no. 4088).

These narrations clearly indicate several fundamental principles:

The certainty of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ);

His affiliation with the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (pbuh);

His descent from Fatimah;

The universal nature of the Mahdist government of justice;

The descent of Jesus (as) and his following of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) in prayer.

1–4. The Mutawātir Nature of the Traditions on Mahdism

Many leading Sunni scholars have regarded the traditions concerning Mahdism as mutawātir, among them:

Shams al-Din al-Safarini in *Lawami‘ al-Anwar al-Bahiyyah*;

al-Shawkani in *al-Tawdih fī Tawatur ma Ja‘a fī al-Muntazar wa al-Dajjal wa al-Masih*;

Mohammad Siddiq Hasan Khan al-Qanuji in *al-Idha‘ah lima Kana wa Yakun Bayna Yaday al-Sa‘ah*;

Ibn Hajar al-Haytami in *al-Sawa‘iq al-Muhriqah*;

al-Suyuti in *al-‘Arf al-Wardi fī Akhbar al-Mahdi*.

Al-Shawkani explicitly states that the traditions concerning Mahdism have reached the level of tawātur and that there remains no doubt regarding the principle of the advent of the Mahdi.

Chapter Two: Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) in the Six Canonical Sunni Collections

2–1. The Status of the Six Canonical Collections in Sunni Hadith

The term al-Sihah al-Sittah (“The Six Authentic Collections”) is the well-known designation for the six principal hadith collections recognized by Ahl al-Sunnah. These include: Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abi Dawud, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Nasa’i, and Sunan Ibn Majah. Among Sunni Muslims, this corpus constitutes the most important body of hadith literature, and its narrations hold a foundational position in the derivation of doctrines and legal rulings.

Although al-Bukhari and Muslim did not dedicate an independent chapter entitled “al-Mahdi,” narrations related to the appearance of the Savior, the descent of Jesus (as), the establishment of universal justice, the



swallowing of the army in al-Bayda', and the rule of a man from the Ahl al-Bayt (as) are found in both collections. In contrast, Abi Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah each devoted independent chapters to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), demonstrating the widespread recognition and acceptance of this belief among Sunni traditionists.

2–2. The Traditions on Mahdism in Sunan Abi Dawud

Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d. 275 AH), in his Sunan, devoted a distinct section entitled Kitab al-Mahdi. This in itself indicates that he regarded the doctrine of Mahdism as an established and authoritative belief.

Among his most famous narrations is the following:

“If there remained from the life of this world only a single day, Allah would prolong that day until He raises in it a man from me — or from my household — whose name corresponds to mine...”

(Sunan Abi Dawud, Kitab al-Mahdi, hadith no. 4282)

“If there remained from the age of the world only one day, Allah would prolong that day until He raises a man from my Ahl al-Bayt whose name is like mine.”

This hadith is among the most important Sunni textual proofs concerning the certainty of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). The narration indicates several fundamental points:

The certainty of the appearance of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ);

His affiliation with the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (pbuh);

The universal nature of his mission;

The continuity of the divine tradition of guidance until the end of history.

2–3. The Traditions on Mahdism in Sunan al-Tirmidhi

Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH) also devoted an independent chapter entitled *Ma Ja'a fi al-Mahdi* (“Reports Concerning the Mahdi”).

Among the well-known narrations is:

“The Mahdi is from my progeny, from the descendants of Fatimah.”
(*Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 4, p. 505)

This narration is among the most important proofs establishing the lineage of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) through Lady Fatimah (as). After transmitting some of these narrations, al-Tirmidhi describes them as “hasan sahih,” indicating their reliability in his view.

This hadith establishes several important doctrinal principles:

- The connection of Mahdism with the Ahl al-Bayt (as);
- The continuation of the line of prophethood through the family of the Prophet (pbuh);
- The rejection of views that identify the Mahdi as someone outside the descendants of Fatimah (as).



2–4. The Traditions on Mahdism in *Sunan Ibn Majah*

Ibn Majah (d. 273 AH), in *Kitab al-Fitan*, devoted a separate chapter to the emergence of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

“A people shall emerge from the East and prepare the ground for the rule of the Mahdi.”

(*Sunan Ibn Majah*, hadith no. 4088)

This narration indicates that the universal government of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) possesses historical and social preliminaries, and that the advent is not a sudden event without prior preparation. In analyzing this narration, some contemporary researchers have interpreted it as referring to Islamic revivalist movements arising in the eastern regions of the Muslim world.

Moreover, this narration emphasizes the role of the people in preparing the conditions for the advent and reinforces the concept of “active expectation.”

2–5. Mahdism in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*

Although al-Bukhari and Muslim did not dedicate independent chapters to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), they transmitted numerous narrations that indicate the doctrine of Mahdism.

A) The Descent of Jesus (as)

“How will you be when the son of Mary descends among you while your Imam is from among yourselves?” (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. 4, p. 205; *Sahih Muslim*, vol. 1, p. 136)

Many Sunni commentators have explicitly stated that the phrase “your Imam” refers to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). Among them are: Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani; al-Nawawi; al-Qastallani; al-Shawkani.

This narration demonstrates:

- The continuity of divine leadership within the Muslim community;
- The supremacy of the Islamic Shari‘ah;
- The universal nature of the Mahdist government;
- The following of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) by a major prophet of firm resolve (ulu al-‘azm).

B) The Swallowing of the Army in al-Bayda’

In *Sahih Muslim* and *Sahih al-Bukhari*, several narrations report the swallowing of an invading army into the earth in the land of al-Bayda’.

Narration: “An army advancing toward the House shall be swallowed up.”

(*Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Fitan*)

This event has been regarded as one of the certain signs of the advent and has been widely transmitted in both Shi‘i and Sunni sources. Many hadith commentators have identified this army as the army of al-Sufyani.



2–6. Why Did al-Bukhari and Muslim Not Explicitly Mention the Name “Mahdi”?

This issue is among the important subjects in hadith studies. Researchers have proposed several possible explanations:

A) Political Considerations during the Abbasid Era
Many Abbasid rulers were highly sensitive toward Alid movements, and the explicit mention of the Mahdi could have carried political consequences.

B) The Particular Methodology of al-Bukhari and Muslim
Al-Bukhari and Muslim did not intend to compile all authentic narrations. Al-Bukhari himself explicitly states that he omitted many authentic hadiths for the sake of brevity.

C) Transmission of the Meaning without Explicit Mention of the Name

Al-Bukhari and Muslim transmitted many of the signs and characteristics related to Mahdism, even though they mentioned the name “Mahdi” less explicitly.

2–7. The Views of the Commentators of the *Sihah* Regarding Mahdism

Many major commentators on the canonical Sunni collections accepted the doctrine of Mahdism:

- **Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani:** In *Fath al-Bari*, he regarded the narrations on Mahdism as reliable and connected the descent of Jesus (as) with the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).
- **Al-Nawawi:** In his commentary on *Sahih Muslim*, he considered the following of the Imam of the Muslim community by Jesus (as) as evidence of the virtue of this ummah.
- **Al-Shawkani:** In *al-Tawdih*, he declared the narrations concerning Mahdism to be mutawātir.
- **Al-Safarini al-Hanbali:** He explicitly states:
“Narrations concerning his emergence have become so numerous that they have reached the level of tawātur ma‘nawi.”

2–8. A Theological Analysis of the Traditions on Mahdism in the Six Canonical Collections

A comprehensive examination of the narrations found in the *Sihah al-Sittah* demonstrates that the principal elements of the doctrine of Mahdism are present within the authoritative Sunni sources. These elements include: The advent of the Savior in the end times; His affiliation with the Ahl al-Bayt (as); His descent from Fatimah (as); The establishment of a universal



government of justice; The descent of Jesus (as); The occurrence of the signs of the advent; The eradication of global oppression.

From a theological perspective, these narrations indicate that human history possesses a divine purpose and will ultimately culminate in the establishment of justice and monotheism.

Chapter Three: The Signs of the Advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ); A Hadith and Historical Analysis

The issue of the signs of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) is among the most significant subjects related to Mahdism in Islamic sources and has been extensively discussed in both Shi'i and Sunni works. These signs, in reality, consist of a series of political, social, military, and spiritual transformations that will occur prior to the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and will prepare the ground for the establishment of the universal government of justice.

An examination of the signs of the advent in Sunni sources demonstrates that many of these signs — particularly the emergence of al-Sufyani, the swallowing of the army in al-Bayda', and the descent of Jesus (as) — have been transmitted in their most authoritative hadith collections.

From an analytical perspective, the signs of the advent may be divided into two categories:

- **Non-definitive signs:** signs whose occurrence may be subject to change or delay;
- **Definitive signs:** signs whose occurrence, according to the narrations, is regarded as certain.

In Shi'i narrations, five signs are identified as the “definitive signs” (*al-'alamat al-hatmiyyah*): The emergence of al-Sufyani; The heavenly cry; The killing of al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah; The swallowing of the army in al-Bayda'; The emergence of the Yamani.

In Sunni sources as well, some of these signs are explicitly mentioned and have received the attention of Sunni traditionists.

1. The Emergence of al-Sufyani: A Symbol of Oppression and Tyranny

One of the most important signs of the advent is the emergence of a figure known as “al-Sufyani.” In Islamic narrations, al-Sufyani is portrayed as a symbol of deviation, oppression, violence, and enmity toward the Ahl al-Bayt (as). Many Sunni narrations report that he will emerge from the region of al-Sham (Greater Syria).

Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi narrates in *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn*:

“A man will emerge from Damascus ... then a man from my Ahl al-Bayt shall rise, and al-Sufyani will send an army against him...” (al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, 1411 AH, vol. 4, p. 565)



Historical and Political Analysis

Throughout Islamic history, al-Sham was one of the principal centers of Umayyad rule and anti-Ahl al-Bayt (as) movements. Therefore, the emergence of al-Sufyani from al-Sham, beyond its literal meaning, also carries symbolic and historical significance, representing the continuity of oppression and tyranny in opposition to the Mahdist movement of justice.

From a sociological perspective, al-Sufyani may be viewed as a symbol of arrogant and domineering systems and powers which, prior to the advent, plunge the world into crisis through the spread of violence, warfare, and hegemonic ambition. In contrast, the Mahdist movement represents a universal uprising aimed at bringing an end to such oppressive structures.

2. The Swallowing of the Army in al-Bayda': A Sign of Divine Intervention

Khasf al-Bayda' refers to the swallowing of al-Sufyani's army into the earth in the land of al-Bayda', located between Mecca and Medina. This event is regarded as one of the definitive signs of the advent and is also recorded in the canonical Sunni collections.

Muslim narrates in his *Sahih*: "An army will march toward a man who has sought refuge in the House of God; but when they reach the land of al-Bayda', all of them will be swallowed into the earth." (Muslim, 1407 AH, vol. 4, p. 2208)

Al-Bukhari, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and Abu Dawud have also transmitted similar narrations.

Theological and Doctrinal Analysis

The event of *Khasf al-Bayda'* is a sign of direct divine intervention in support of the movement of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). In this incident, the army of oppression is destroyed by divine will without military confrontation or warfare. This demonstrates that the Mahdist government is not merely a political or military movement, but rather a divinely guided uprising endorsed by God.

From a doctrinal perspective, *Khasf al-Bayda'* expresses the truth that at the height of global oppression, the divine tradition decrees the destruction of falsehood and the ultimate triumph of truth — the very promise repeatedly emphasized in the Noble Qur'an.

Chapter Four: Independent Works of Sunni Scholars on Imam al-Mahdi (AJ)

Belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) among Sunni scholars has not been limited merely to the transmission of a few narrations. Rather, many Sunni traditionists, historians, and theologians authored independent works concerning him. These writings demonstrate the extensive attention given by Sunni scholars to the issue of Mahdism and their acceptance of



the principle of the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). The most important of these works are introduced below:

1. **Al-Hakim al-Naysaburi (d. 405 AH), in *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn***

In the fourth volume of this work, he transmitted numerous narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his lineage, his universal government, and the signs of the advent, considering many of them to be authentic.

2. **Mohammad ibn Talhah al-Shafi'i (d. 652 AH), in *Matalib al-Su'ul fi Manaqib Al al-Rasul***

3. The twelfth chapter of this work is entirely devoted to the Twelfth Imam, Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

4. **Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 654 AH), in *Tadhkirat Khawas al-Ummah fi Khasa'is al-A'imma***

5. He authored an independent section entitled *Fasl fi Dhikr al-Hujjah al-Mahdi* concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

6. **Mohammad ibn Yusuf al-Ganji al-Shafi'i (d. 658 AH), in *al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman***

7. This work is among the most important independent Sunni writings concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and contains numerous chapters discussing his lineage, advent, government, and characteristics.

8. **Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH), in *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah***

In this work, he accepted the narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and regarded some of them as authentic.

9. **Ibrahim ibn Mohammad al-Hamuwayni (d. 732 AH), in *Fara'id al-Simtayn fi Fada'il al-Murtada wa al-Batul wa al-Sibtayn wa al-A'imma min Dhurriyyatihim***

10. This work transmits numerous narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his occultation, advent, and Imamate.

11. **Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 AH), in *al-Manar al-Munif fi al-Sahih wa al-Da'if***

A section of this work is devoted to the narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), and the author considers the narration "There is no Mahdi except Jesus son of Mary" to be weak.

12. **Ibn Sabbagh al-Maliki (d. 855 AH), in *al-Fusul al-Muhimmah fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-A'imma*: The twelfth chapter of this book is dedicated to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), including his birth, occultation, titles, and governance.**

13. **Ibn Tulun al-Dimashqi (d. 953 AH), in *al-A'imma al-Ithna 'Ashar*: In this work, the Twelve Imams are introduced, and Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) is presented as the twelfth Imam.**



14. ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha‘rani (d. 973 AH), in *al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir fi Bayan ‘Aqa’id al-Aka’bir*: In this book, he identifies Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) as the son of Imam Hasan al-Askari (as) and explicitly affirms his occultation.

15. Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 974 AH), in *al-Sawa‘iq al-Muhriqah and al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi ‘Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar and al-Fatawa al-Hadithiyah*: In these works, he transmits narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and emphasizes the certainty of his advent.

16. ‘Ali al-Qari (d. 1014 AH), in *Mirqat al-Mafatih Sharh Mishkat al-Masabih*: In his commentary on the hadiths of Mahdism, he discusses the narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

17. Ahmad ibn Yusuf al-Qaramani (d. 1019 AH), in *Akhbar al-Duwal wa Athar al-Uwal*: This work contains an independent chapter on Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his birth, and his occultation.

18. ‘Abd Allah al-Shafi‘i, in *al-Ithaf bi Hubb al-Ashraf*: In this book, alongside introducing the Twelve Imams, he refers to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) and his titles.

19. Shaykh Sulayman al-Qunduzi al-Hanafi (d. 1294 AH), in *Yanabi‘ al-Mawaddah li Dhawi al-Qurba*: One of the most important Sunni works on the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt (as), with several chapters dedicated to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his occultation, advent, and lineage.

20. Sayyid Mu‘min al-Shablanji, in *Nur al-Absar fi Manaqib Al Bayt al-Nabi al-Mukhtar*: In a dedicated chapter, he discusses the life and characteristics of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

21. Mohammad ibn Ahmad Isma‘il, in *al-Mahdi Haqiqa la Khurafa*: This is a contemporary Sunni work written in defense of the doctrine of Mahdism and in affirmation of the narrations concerning Imam al-Mahdi (AJ).

These works clearly indicate that the issue of Mahdism has not only been discussed in Sunni hadith sources, but that many prominent Sunni scholars have authored extensive independent works on Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), considering his advent to be one of the established doctrines of Islam.

Many of these scholars explicitly state that Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) is the son of Imam Hasan al-Askari (as) and the twelfth Imam from the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (pbuh).

Al-Qunduzi al-Hanafi writes: “He is Mohammad al-Muntazar, the son of Hasan al-Askari, who is known among the elite and the trustworthy scholars.” (Al-Qunduzi, 1308 AH, vol. 3, p. 356)



Conclusion

An examination of the Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions, and reliable Sunni sources demonstrates that belief in the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) is an authentic, deeply rooted, and widely accepted Islamic doctrine, not exclusive to the Shi'i school. While the detailed explanations regarding the personality, birth, and occultation of the Imam vary among Islamic schools, the fundamental belief in the emergence of a divinely guided savior from the Ahl al-Bayt (pbuh), the establishment of a global government of justice, and the eradication of oppression and corruption is broadly accepted among Muslim scholars—particularly Sunni traditionists.

An examination of the *Sihah al-Sittah* shows that Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah dedicated independent chapters to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), while al-Bukhari and Muslim also transmitted important narrations concerning the descent of Jesus (as), the leadership of a righteous Imam from the Muslim community, the swallowing of an army in al-Bayda', and other eschatological developments. Many Sunni commentators have interpreted these reports as referring to Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). Moreover, the explicit affirmation by leading Sunni scholars such as al-Shawkani, al-Safarini, al-Suyuti, and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami regarding the mutawātir status of Mahdist narrations reflects the strength and established nature of this belief within Sunni hadith heritage.

The analysis of narrations related to the signs of the advent further indicates that Mahdism is not merely a metaphysical or distant eschatological idea, but rather one with profound historical, political, and civilizational dimensions. Concepts such as the emergence of al-Sufyani, the swallowing of the army in al-Bayda', the descent of Jesus (as), and the role of eastern supporters highlight the ongoing struggle between truth and falsehood and the ultimate hope for the triumph of divine justice in human history.

Furthermore, the presentation of independent works by Sunni scholars on Imam al-Mahdi (AJ) shows that Mahdism is not limited to the transmission of a few narrations but has been the subject of extensive theological, hadith-based, and scholarly investigation. Some of these scholars even explicitly affirm the birth of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ), his lineage from Imam Hasan al-Askari (as), and the continuation of his life.

Despite claims made by some Wahhabi writers, the existence and authenticity of narrations concerning the Mahdi (AJ) in Sunni sources are undeniable. The abundance of such narrations in authoritative Sunni collections reflects their acceptance and validation by major Sunni scholars, while their mutawātir status further confirms their reliability according to Sunni methodological standards.



In sum, Mahdism represents one of the most significant shared beliefs among Muslims and provides an important intellectual and spiritual foundation for strengthening Islamic unity, reviving religious hope, combating oppression, and promoting justice in the contemporary world. A scholarly and evidence-based re-reading of this doctrine within Sunni sources can play a vital role in fostering sectarian rapprochement and countering divisive tendencies within the Muslim community.

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Reconsidering Family Law Reforms, with Emphasis on Mahr, in Light of the Teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and Imami Shiite Jurisprudence

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Abstract

Updating family laws is an important juristic and social problem. This article argues that the Ahl al-Bayt (as) tradition provides practical precedents for context-sensitive legal reasoning, showing that the implementation of rulings may change when their subject-matter, social function, or consequences change. According to a well-established theory in Shiite jurisprudence, legal rulings are grounded in real interests and harms. The permanence of Islam, therefore, does not lie in the rigidity of every legal form, but in its capacity to establish enduring principles that can guide changing human circumstances. Within this framework, mahr had a specific function in earlier social contexts. In contemporary society, however, it has often been transformed into a sign of women's social status or a guarantee for marital continuity. This transformation has contributed to the spread of excessive mahr and has created significant social and legal difficulties. Since the Islamic legal system defines the family as an institution aimed at moral growth, mutual responsibility, and the upbringing of righteous children, family laws must be evaluated in light of these purposes. This article suggests that the contemporary legal structure of mahr and the unilateral male right to divorce in permanent marriage should be reconsidered. Instead of treating excessive mahr as an immediately enforceable debt and divorce as a one-sided male prerogative, the law should allow both spouses to seek judicial divorce under clearly defined conditions, while protecting women's financial rights through fair and balanced legal mechanisms. Such reform would necessarily require corresponding changes in other family laws.

Keywords: Islam, Family law, Immortality of Islam, Divorce, Mahr.

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Introduction

The family is one of the pillars of society, for which various functions have been mentioned. Every ethnic group has set rules for the stability of the family. Islam has also enacted laws in the field of the family, some of which are derived from the Qur'an and some others from the Sunnah (The speech and behavior of the Prophet Mohammad). Two important laws that have a Qur'anic origin are:

a) The payment of mahr (dowry or marriage settlement) by a man to a woman (Nisá, 4).

And b) the right of a man to divorce the woman.

The mahr payment law has become a social problem in some countries like Iran. On the one hand, women consider high mahr as a sign of their dignity. It is thought that the higher the dowry, the higher the value in the husband's family and in this way there is a competition among women to increase their mahr, and on the other hand, demanding dowry has imprisoned many men by women. To solve this problem, the following two solutions are suggested by Members of the Iranian Parliament: limiting the amount of mahr to 14 or 110 gold coins of *Bahar Azadi* (a kind of valuable money in Iran) and avoiding prisoning men because of inability to pay it. The Qur'an states that the dowry should be paid as much as it is, and promises severe punishment in the Hereafter for those who do not pay the dowry for women (Nisá, 20), and the latter is not legal. In addition, legalizing on no the incarceration of men because of failure to pay mahr raises other problems like deceiving on women, not paying dowry, overweighing to women, easy divorce.

It seems, family laws dating back 1,400 years are no longer applicable today and need to be changed. Can these rules be changed? The main question of this research is whether family laws in Islam can change according to the conditions of time and place or are these laws eternal and impossible to change? To answer this question, it is necessary to consider the following questions as well:

A) What is the purpose of forming a family? By recognizing the goal or goals, one can realize the expediency and corruption of the rulings.

B) Is goodness and badness of deeds rational or religious? If the goodness and badness of religious deeds are based on shari'a, one cannot change the rules and laws of religion, and only the Shari'a is allowed to do so. However, if the good and the bad of deeds are rational, that is, the rulings follow the interests and corruptions, then the ruling can also be changed by removing the expediency or corruption.

C) How can religion meet the changing needs of human beings?



D) What is the philosophy of mahr and the right to divorce? Are there any other alternatives for them?

E) What are the problems of men in paying mahr and having the right to divorce in society?

To answer this question, this article also refers to practical precedents from the Ahl al-Bayt (as) tradition in which the implementation of rulings changed according to social conditions, public interest, harm prevention, or change of subject-matter.

Definitions and Method

Mahr: Dowry is a gift that a man gives to a woman when he marries, and it is the order of the Qur'an and Sunnah among Muslims.

Family laws: Family laws in the Islamic world, especially in Iran.

Shiite jurisprudence: refers to a set of laws that Shiite jurists have extracted from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet and consider it obligatory for Muslims to practice it.

The intellectual goodness and ugliness of deeds: It means that man can realize the good and bad of some deeds without paying attention to God's commands.

The method of answering the questions in this research is as follows:

1. To answer the question, the purpose of forming a family is first considered the purpose of creation in the Qur'an. The goal of the family must also be in line with that goal, and by observing the nature, the goal of forming a family has been inferred.

2. Regarding the rational sense and ugliness of applying the opinions of religious scholars, it has been explained from jurisprudential and theological texts.

3. Based on the rule of goodness and the ugliness of reason, the application of my own theory regarding the change of law in Islam has been explained.

4. The philosophy of Mehr is inferred from the Qur'an and jurisprudential texts.

5. Regarding the social problems of dowry, the author's previous research has also been used.

Finally, what is presented in this article is our theory of the ability to change religious laws and is based on a scientific method. The root of this publication is the same rule of goodness and ugliness of deeds that the Shiites have accepted and we have used it regarding dowry and the right to divorce.



The purpose of forming a family

The Holy Qur'an mentions that the purpose of forming a family is the peace of mind for man and woman (Rum, 21). However, the question is why did God create man and woman in such a way that they rely on each other? Are men and women restless creatures that can only be comforted by being together? If so, why did God make them interdependent? To answer this question, it is necessary to state the purpose of creation because God created man, who is the finest of his creatures, for a specific purpose and forming a family is also in line with that goal.

According to the Quranic view the purpose of human creation is to reach God, which means to attain divine attributes, and in fact, the appearance of God should reveal in man. This claim is indicated by several Quranic reasons (Mahdavinooor, 2014). Therefore, it can be said that the most important reason for forming a family is childbearing, survival of human generation and the divine upbringing of children. The spiritual and sexual dependence of men and women to each other is for the realization of this goal. When one looks at nature, he or she realizes that other creatures have a family life; and in this respect, they are not different from humans. The difference between animal family systems is the lifespan of males and females. What determines the life span of a couple is the period of time a child needs to be raised? In some animals, the mother can raise the animals alone. In this type of animal, male and female are only together during the mating. Male and female are together for a longer time if the mother alone cannot raise the children. In the meantime, the human child has the longest upbringing time.

Human upbringing has two dimensions: physical and mental. Spiritual cultivation is essential until human death. It is the duty of parents to raise a child to the extent that he or she can take care of their own body and soul. Raising a human child is a time-consuming task and cannot be done by one person. Hence, God created man and woman in such a way that they have a long common life together. First, the sexual desire of a man is perpetual, so the need for a spouse is permanent. Second, men and women are emotionally interdependent.

The goodness and badness of rational or religious rulings

If the good and the bad deeds are rational, that is, the rulings follow the interests and corruptions, when the interests and corruptions of a ruling are altered, that ruling must also be changed. Based on shari'ah view the rules can be changed. Hence mahr and the right to divorce, if the expediency and corruption of the sentence is changed, the verdict also needs to be modified. If the good and the bad are religious, then man cannot change the ruling.



Islamic scholars are divided into two groups regarding the obedience of the rules to good and evil or good and bad. Some believe in the goodness and badness of reason and consider the relationship between action and result to be developmental. They think that anything human mind judges or decrees on, shari'a judges and authorizes it, too, and vice versa. Allamah Al-Hilli divides human actions into three categories:

- a. Actions such as our awareness of the goodness of justice, the good and the bad of which are known by the necessity of reason;
- b. Actions such as customary affairs, in which good and bad are relative;
- c. Actions such as deeds of worship, in which the intellect is incapable of perceiving their goodness and badness that are expressed by the Shari'a (Hilli, 140 AH).

Now, the question is whether the shari'a affairs are subject to corruption and real interests and God has given reason the ability to discover those materials and corruptions, or that God has established the relationship between religious affairs with pleasure and suffering in a contractual way. Because God is the procreator of the universe, he puts reality that way, and man's real intellect discovers the contract. It was likely that God created the universe in a different way and could make a different form of relationship between pleasure, suffering and moral matters and reason discovered them as real relationships. For example, God could have created the universe in such a way that lies are good and truth is bad.

Rationalists believe that actions have real interests and corruptions. Whether the Shari'a rules the goodness and badness of some actions or not, the intellect realizes their inherent goodness and badness (Motahari, 1995). Therefore, according to these people, there are three categories of actions that the Shari'a commands or forbids:

- a. Rational independence means actions that while not ruled by the shari'a, the intellect perceives their good or bad independently.
- b. Actions such as bank interest that the intellect understands their good and bad after the shari'a expresses their good or bad.
- c. Things like the fasting of Ramadan that the intellect is not able to discover the good and the bad of them, and the expression of their goodness and badness is with the shari'a (Tayyib, 1993).

Despite the belief of this group of people to follow the rules of good and evil, there are disagreements in this regard. Some of them suppose that it is expedient in itself to rule and to follow it. Some believe that expediency is inherent in the rulings, and others think that expediency is in something else. This argument is important because if the expediency is in applying in itself, the law can no longer be changed.



Others believe that the real rulings are subject to the interests and corruptions that belong to them. This group has two arguments for their claim:

A) Some verses of the Holy Qur'an [(Isrá, 32) and (Māidah, 90)] state that the corruptor belongs to the ruling, that is, adultery, drunkenness and gambling, and not to the falsification of rulings; or in the verses (Al-Ankabut, 45), (Baqarah, 183) (Tawbah, 103), the expediency in belonging to the ruling is praying, fasting and paying zakat, not applying those rulings (Alidoost, 2005). If it was intended to use such acts, it should have appeared with the application of the actions as well.

B) Another argument is based on the division of sin into major and minor. According to this group of scholars, application of rules is not different and when sin is divided into major and minor, the corruptor must be in the belonging of the ruling; otherwise, the sins were not different (Tabrizi, 1996). Some scholars such as Mohaghegh Khorasani and his followers oppose the famous view and believe that the rulings are a function of the materials available in their application of rules not their belongings (Khorasani, 1425 AH). This means that the rulings should be subject to expediency and not corruption because it does not make sense for a shari'a to make a ruling in which there is corruption.

The most important argument of this category is the existence of cases in the shari'a, for which the rulings are not subject to the existing criteria in the belonging. In some cases, there is no expediency or corruption in the subject matter of the sentence. For example, in the case of conditionless permissible, which is considered one of the five obligatory rulings, expediency does not belong to the ruling (Mazinani and Shakeri, 2013). Some also think that in apparent rulings, expediency does not belong to the ruling; rather, it is a ruling in itself (Khorasani, 1425 AH).

Some scholars believe that the existence of expediency in applying the rules is not reasonable because when the application is realized, the expediency is also attained, and there is no need for a practical obligation to do so since its purpose is achieved as soon as the sentence is applied (Saedi, 2002).

In contrast to the above category, which considers the good and bad of rulings to be rational, the Ash'arites believe in the good and the bad of shari'a and believe that the intellect cannot rule on the good or the bad of deeds; rather, their ruling is the responsibility of shari'a, and what the shari'a considers good is good and what it considers bad is evil (al-Shawkānī, 1419 AH) because the activity of God and his actions cannot be tied to anything. However, following the rules from good and evil requires binding God's actions. They argue that all actions are the same in the eyes



of intellect and completely deny the good and the bad of intellect as well as expediency and corruptor, and they say that if, for example, the shari'a had ordered oppression, rudeness and lies and if it had forbidden justice, honesty and kindness, one would have considered the former as good and the latter as bad (Hilli, 140 AH).

In response to the question of expediency and corruption criterion, those who have faith in the good and the bad of reason and consider the rulings as subject to good and evil, state that the criterion of expediency and corruption is alignment with the goal (Mesbah-Yazdi, 2015). The goal is one of the following five things: 1. Preserving the religion of the people; 2. Self-preservation; 3. Preservation of reason; 4. Generation preservation, and 5. Preservation of property (Ghazali, 1417 AH). Now, the question is what to do when there is a conflict among expediencies?

In response to this question, expediencies have been divided into several categories:

A) Essential expediencies

B) The expediency of necessities on which the maintenance of ordinary human order depends and without them human life is disrupted.

C) Admirable and decorative expediencies, the observance of which is considered valuable and violating them does not disrupt human life (Amirzadeh Jir Keli, 2004). If these expediencies interfere with each other, essential expediencies take precedence over necessity expediencies and needy expediencies take precedence over decorative and admirable expediencies.

Occasionally, some actions are both expedient and corrupt. Expediency and corruption of these types of action is the compulsory total of its expediency and corruption. If the expediency of the act is more than its corruptor, it is a good deed, and otherwise it is a bad act (Ameli, 1993).

The big problem that remains unanswered is what to do if we make a mistake in identifying expediency and corruption? Their answer to the question is that shari'a resolves disputes. If we accept this, we have an intellect whose identification is not correct and should be subject to shari'a that is not different from the opinion of Ash'arites. If we accept this view, we must answer this question: How and to what extent does shari'a rule the intellect? In the following, we will examine the theory of autonomy and also answer the aforementioned questions.

The author believes that the human intellect has the ability to discover many things. But man's beliefs, of which his accepted values are a part, are not merely the subject of reason. Rather, they are subject to indoctrination, instincts, individual and group interests, pleasant and unpleasant, and so on. Due to the differences in the abovementioned cases, there will be a conflict



between human credit perceptions. The author claims that in their variable component, human beings have specific principles and they need to understand the principles of good and bad of other actions within that framework. Obviously, they may also realize the good and the bad of those principles. Proving this requires the following preconditions.

1. Validity of rulings: Concepts that human beings contract to manage social affairs and have no objective basis. For example, property is a matter of credit, and it is not possible to broadly show what it is. Man has formulated those concepts to manage his social affairs and may change them one day. It is clear that the concepts of credit in legal terms are man-made illusions. However, the rest of concepts come from external origin, and although the structure of human existence may be effective in their abstraction, they are not entirely at the disposal of man. Credit judgments mean contractual concepts. The importance of separating true perceptions from credit is obvious. Sometimes the lack of segregation causes people to scrutinize information such as facts in rational ways or generalize the result of research on credentials to facts and as a result they should consider facts as relative concepts that are subject to human needs (Motahari, 1392 SH-a).

2. Statements express informative judgments since every phenomenon pursues goals and uses actions that are formally equipped with their means and never seeks to perform actions for which it is not prepared. In perceptual beings, the concept must be derived from the relationship between the active force and the effect of the verb. The general rule in determining whether a concept is credible or genuine is that it belongs to an aspect of active forces and in which the concept of "must" can be assumed. So, if we say "apple is the fruit of a tree", it would be a real thought, but if we say "this apple should be eaten", it is a valid thought (Tabatabai, 2008). In fact, there can be a relationship that should be depicted as shown in Figure 1.

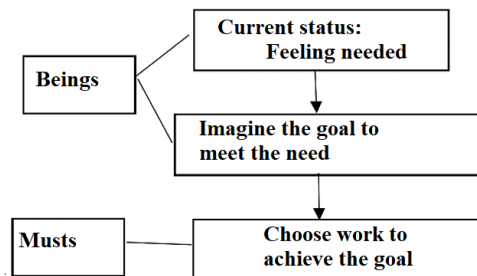


Figure 1. Abstraction of Musts from Beings based on Allameh Tabatabai's View



(Existence): Status quo: feeling of need → Imagination of purpose to meet the need → Validity of the verb to achieve the goal (Must)

Figure 1. The method of abstracting the concept of Must from existence according to Allameh Tabatabai

3. Lack of proof of jurisprudential propositions: Jurisprudential propositions are valid because they are not proof, and in this respect, the rules of rational propositions are not applicable. It should be noted that the relationship between production in real perceptions is formally diverse, namely allegory, metaphor, and analogy. The allegorical and inductive methods rely on the hidden analogy with which they are associated; therefore, without the analogical method, the two cannot establish the productive relationship between premise and the result, and only the deductive method can formally create the relationship between the introduction of premise and the result (al-Muzaffar, 2003). Credits have an impact on the real world, and their credibility is to meet human needs. At least, this research is not considered if the credentials, which are only valid and have no effect on human life and on the real world, are not rejected.

There is no argument in credit cases because the premise of the argument must have three characteristics, namely necessity, durability and generality, while these three features are not realized in credit cases. These characteristics are obtained by conforming to the soul of the Almighty but the propositions of the self are not standard; as a result, it cannot be ascribed to such descriptions.

In human credentials, one considers a goal and validates the concepts they borrow from the truth in order to achieve that goal. For research in credentials, that end is considered and anything in line with that goal is valuable. Therefore, research in the field of credit is based on compromise on or acceptance of specific goals in credit (Serami, 2006).

Allameh Tabatabai considers jurisprudence as a credit (Tabatabai, 1997); therefore, the statements or principles used to deduce Islamic rulings are all types of credit. As a result, the rules of credit should be used in them and developmental methods cannot be used in this case (Serami, 2006).

One of the valid results of knowing jurisprudence is that it also becomes a relative matter and the rules of jurisprudence can be changed based on interests and corruptions. There is no doubt about whoever identifies the benefits and corruptions. Either God expresses the rules through His messengers according to His interests and corruptions, or He has left it to man to discern on them.

As mentioned, human laws, customs and traditions, social norms and ethics are all concepts of credit. And the establishment of credit concepts in social life is influenced by the attitudes and views that exist towards the



world and human beings. Those who consider man to be purely material and limited to the life of the world and who consider death to be the end of human life shape morality, custom, and social rules in such a way to enjoy the greatest material pleasures, lusts, and wishes of this world.

The pagans and idolaters create traditions and laws in order to win the pleasure of their goddess; however, those who believe in the origin and resurrection imagine it in the form of social life and its rules, which ultimately lead to worldly and otherworldly happiness. Therefore, in relation to the fundamental attitudes of man and the world (the realm of true perceptions), we will have different forms of social life and credit concepts (Aqajani, 2014). In fact, various perspectives on life are formed based on what society validates, and these life perspectives shape different lifestyles and thereby special moods. As a result, even those who believe in the divine may validate different morals according to the conditions of place and time.

4. Immortality of the rules of religion: Imam Khomeini, Allameh Tabatabai, Shahid Motahari, Ostad Mohammad Taghi Jafari, Seyyed Qutb and others consider the main goal of religion to be hereafter and to deal with the world transversely; nevertheless, without addressing this cross-cutting issue, the main goal will not be achieved (Khomeini, 1990). If religion is a collection of teachings mentioned in the Qur'an, it must be accepted that religion is not an individual matter and has also dealt with social affairs, including government and economics. Therefore, it must be said that religion is a complete and comprehensive thing that is involved in all aspects of individual and social life, and it is a comprehensive instruction seeking human happiness in this world and the hereafter; therefore, the realm of religion cannot be limited or separated from economics, politics and government.

5. Changing the rules within the framework of principles is a prerequisite for the immortality of religion. As stated, on one hand, religion has not neglected any aspect of human life, and on the other hand, due to differences in societies in which human beings live, their needs are also different. Religion must be constantly renewed in order to meet human needs, and communication with God through revelation must never be cut off; however, according to the Qur'an, there will be no prophet after Mohammad (Ahzaab, 40). As a result, human communication is cut off through revelation, and the religion cannot answer all the questions. How can this paradox be solved?

Morteza Motahari in his book *Islam and the Needs of Time* has solved this paradox by raising the issue of fixed and variable needs. Man has two kinds of requirements. The basic human needs that are constant and the



changing needs that vary over time. For example, man used to heat himself using coal and needed it, but today he no longer requires coal. In the Islamic legislative system, a fixed law is set for permanent needs and a variable law for changing needs. But the law of variable is one which Islam has made it dependent on a fixed law and has designated that fixed law as the spirit of this variable law, and the fixed law itself changes this variable law (Motahari, 1392 Sh-b). Scholars respond to the changing needs of human beings through the process of *ijtihad* from religious sources. Now the question is that the needs of human beings are very different. How can scholars meet all the variable needs of human beings?

Many scholars claim that jurisprudence governs society, and this requires that they provide solutions to society's problems and even lead society toward the desired direction. Scholars cannot expect others to offer solutions and be mere observers and advisers to others.

God has set laws for all human affairs, and no dignity has been abandoned from the affairs of human beings. In the fixed aspect of human life, God has specified all the details, and in the case of variable aspect of man, it is not possible to express the details. Thus, God has stated principles; that is, in all aspects of human life, Islam has introduced the prevailing principles and values. Now, man uses his principles to extract the principles and details, and by applying the principles to the conditions of the time, he extracts the appropriate systems of each time, which is the same process of *ijtihad*.

Reason discovers the expediency and corruption of the rulings in the present era

Shiite fundamentalists believe in the goodness and badness of the rules; nonetheless, when it comes to action, they are cautious and refuse to change the rulings according to the conditions of the time. One of the drawbacks is that whether the intellect is able to discover the good and the bad of the rulings? If we consider only the intellect of the infallibles as the discoverer of the intellect and that of others as incapable of discovering the good and the bad, then the shiite theory also leads to the good and the bad of shari'a. Shiite fundamentalists must do their duties in this regard, either believing in the goodness and badness of reason and adhering to its requirements or giving up their claim.

The intellect is the prophet of within. Everyone accepts religion with his or her intellect. Authority is the principle of religion with reason. In addition, the intellect of many people understands things, but the God who created man to reach the highest possible level of a being, even for those things that the intellect understands, has commanded and approved the rule of reason so that there is no harm in guiding human beings. If the intellect



of all human beings was perfect, there would be no requirement for a prophet in those areas. However, religion has a general audience and the prophet has to say everything.

Experts in any field should be familiar with these principles and also learn the inference rules of subsidiaries from the principles and then extract the subsidiaries according to conditions of the time. In economics, for example, the mujtahid is an economist who can determine the economic system of Islam according to the conditions of the day. How can a jurist who is not familiar with economics or economists who are not familiar with jurisprudence express the Islamic economic system? If we do not do so, we can not claim a universal answer for humanity. There should be such scholars in politics, medicine, etc. One cannot leave the planning to those who are not familiar with religious issues and recruit the scholars only to supervise their work.

If jurisprudence is viewed in this way, it means that the principles of Islam are counted hierarchically in all matters. Then, the scholars should derive general rules according to the conditions of time. Afterward, a general rule should be extracted from the words and deeds of the infallibles so that the problems can be solved by those principles. In this case, the words and deeds of the infallible will not be an argument. The words and deeds of the infallible will be the only evidence of how the general rules were applied to the subsidiaries at that time.

In this view, tradition is a solution to problems of the past, not a fixed thing for the future, which may even cause problems for them. Communities must change their traditions according to the conditions of their time but within the framework of those principles. Based on the above statements and the opinion of those who believe in intellectual goodness and ugliness, if it is proved that the interests and corruptions of family laws have changed, the laws can be transformed based on new interests and corruptions.

Practical Precedents from the Ahl al-Bayt Tradition

The Ahl al-Bayt (as) tradition contains several precedents showing that the implementation of religious, legal, and social rulings may change when the subject-matter, social function, or public interest changes. This does not mean that the Imams abrogated divine law. Rather, it means that they distinguished between the fixed principles of the Shari‘a and their historically conditioned applications.

A clear example is Imam Ali’s explanation of the Prophet’s instruction concerning dyeing grey hair. When Imam Ali was asked about the Prophet’s command to dye grey hair and avoid resembling the Jews, he explained that this instruction had been issued when Islam was limited in



number and socially vulnerable; but after Islam became widespread and firmly established, people were free in this matter (Nahj al-Balaghah, Saying 17). This example shows that a ruling or instruction may be connected to a specific social purpose, and when that purpose disappears, its practical legal force may also change.

Another example can be seen in Imam Ali's policy of equal distribution from the public treasury. When he was criticized for treating people equally in the distribution of Bayt al-Mal, he refused to seek political support through injustice and declared that even if the wealth had been his own, he would have distributed it equally, let alone when it belonged to Allah (Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 126). This shows that Imam Ali changed the prevailing administrative practice of preferential distribution and restored a justice-based legal policy. The case is important because it demonstrates that governmental and financial regulations may be restructured when they conflict with justice.

A further example appears in Imam Ali's instruction to Malik al-Ashtar. He ordered the governor to reduce the tax burden when people suffered from hardship, disease, lack of water, flood, or drought, because the prosperity of the land and the people was more important than immediate revenue collection (Nahj al-Balaghah, Letter 53). In the same letter, he also ordered the governor to prevent hoarding and to punish those who continued it after prohibition, while insisting that prices should not harm either sellers or buyers (Nahj al-Balaghah, Letter 53). These instructions show that economic rules and governmental policies are not applied in abstraction from social conditions; rather, they must be administered in a way that prevents harm and protects public welfare.

The non-application of the hadd punishment for theft during famine provides another important precedent. Imam al-Sadiq is reported to have said that the thief is not subject to amputation in a year of famine, and another report states that Imam Ali did not cut the hand of a thief during days of famine (al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 7, p. 230, hadith 2; al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 28, p. 291, hadith 34795). This example is especially significant because it shows that even where a punishment has a textual basis, its implementation depends on the full realization of its subject and conditions. Hunger, necessity, and public crisis may change the legal assessment of the act.

A similar distinction appears in Imam Ali's military practice. In the Battle of Jamal, he ordered that fleeing opponents should not be pursued, the wounded should not be killed, and those who closed their doors or laid down their weapons should be safe. In another context, however, different treatment was applied because the opposing army still had an active



command structure to which it could return (al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 5, p. 12). This shows that the legal treatment of apparently similar acts may change when the underlying subject changes.

The same logic is also visible in the teachings of Imam al-Sadiq concerning clothing and social custom. When he was asked why Imam Ali wore rough clothing while he himself wore better garments, Imam al-Sadiq explained that Imam Ali wore such clothing in a time when it was not socially condemned, whereas wearing the same type of clothing in a later context could produce notoriety; therefore, “the best clothing of every time is the clothing of its people” (al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 444, hadith 15). In another report, when Sufyan al-Thawri criticized Imam al-Sadiq’s clothing, the Imam explained that the Prophet lived in a time of poverty and hardship, whereas when prosperity becomes available, the righteous are more entitled to benefit from lawful blessings, provided that the rights of Allah and people are fulfilled (al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 442, hadith 8). These reports demonstrate the role of custom, social perception, and economic conditions in the practical application of religious norms.

These precedents are directly relevant to contemporary mahr law. Mahr as a Qur’anic and juristic right of women should not be denied. However, when excessive mahr changes from a dignified marital gift into an impossible debt, a coercive bargaining tool, or a source of imprisonment and family instability, its current legal function must be re-examined. From an Ahl al-Bayt-oriented perspective, reforming mahr law does not mean rejecting Shiite jurisprudence; rather, it means preserving its higher objectives: justice, prevention of harm, protection of women’s dignity, stability of family life, and fairness between spouses.

Method of discovering the interests and corruptions of the rulings

When we accept that the human intellect today is the discoverer of interests and corruptions of the rulings, it is necessary to determine a way to do so. To discover the benefits and corruptions, we can examine the effects and results of the sentence that are divided into this world and the hereafter. Principles derived from the Qur’an and Sunnah can be used to study the effects and consequences of hereafter. If a ruling is not placed within the framework of principles derived from the Holy Quran, it will corrupt the hereafter. To discover worldly interests and corruptions, it is necessary to examine the individual and psychological effects (including spiritual and psychological effects and consequences) and the social outcomes of the sentence. This requires specialized teams in psychology and sociology do it based on the specific field and new research methods.



Philosophy of mahr and the right to divorce

Every legal system has a goal that is achieved by having all its components. The purpose of the legal system in Islam is that no one oppresses another in human relations. Marriage is an obligation that imposes rights and duties on both men and women. In the past, marriage was not legally registered, and only the witnesses and honesty of men and women could be effective in proving the rights of individuals. Human life should not be the toy of lustful people. There is no difference between men and women; no one should play with other people's lives. If there is no mahr or anything like that, the man can easily leave the woman and entice another woman. If a man proposes to a woman and the marriage contract is entered into effect between them, even if they are not related and the man does not like his wife for any reason, he has to pay something. This cost allows the man to make the right and rational decision and not to play with anyone.

The reason why a man gives mahr to a woman is that the man usually chooses first. If there is no mahr, the man can easily separate from his wife and go to other women. Now that a man gives mahr to a woman, she should not take advantage of this. A woman who marries a man with the intention of receiving mahr and easily separating from him and going to another man, in this case the man is abused; however, if the man has the right to divorce, the woman cannot easily play with man's life. Without this legal system, there would be a lot of abuse.

Today, marriages are registered and, as in the past, a man cannot divorce his wife without the permission of the court. People cannot take advantage of each other if other deterrents are specified in accordance with the conditions of place and time.

Problems with mahr and the right to divorce for men

Unfortunately, today, mahr has become a social problem in Iran, where a man must commit to pay the mahr that a woman can demand whenever she wants (Mansour, 2005). The amount of mahr has no condition other than being possession of woman (Mansour, 2005). In the early days of Islam, mahr was a sign of a man's honesty in living with a woman, but today it has become a guarantee (Motahari, 1990). Therefore, the woman's family is trying to raise the mahr. A woman can claim mahr before obedience. In this case, the man must also pay the alimony to the woman (Jahangir 2005, Article 1085). The legislator pressures the man to protect the woman without considering the change in the nature of mahr regardless of his economic status (Mansour, 2005). Such a man will not be able to start a new family for years. If the mahr is a guarantee today, why should a man give such a guarantee? If mahr is useful for the survival of life because



divorce is in the hands of the man it should be demanded when the man is guilty not whenever the woman wants. In addition to mahr, a woman receives alimony, which is often lower than her dignity. It is interesting that with this effort of female devotion, after the death of the husband, the heirs share what the husband and wife have painstakingly collected among themselves, and only a small part of what is left is the wife's share that do not have a significant share in the ownership.

Change in divorce, mahr and family ownership laws

Today, when all marriages are registered and the man himself cannot divorce his wife without the permission of the court, it is necessary to change the mahr law and man's right to divorce to solve the above problems and prolong the married life. This means that no mahr should be specified at the time of marriage and each spouse can apply for divorce from the court for specific reasons. In order for men and women not to oppress each other, it is necessary to carefully determine the share of each of them in their assets. For this purpose, the following suggestions are presented.

1. The property of the husband and wife, even the dowry that she brings to the husband's house before marriage, is calculated as the initial capital of life.

2. All incomes of men and women, including the value of work at home and abroad, gifts, rent, and so on should be determined.

3. Audit of assets should be done at the end of the year, which has the following benefits:

1. The possession of each man and woman is proportionate to their effort
2. Woman's work at home is appreciated
3. Women become encouraged in their life
4. Stronger support than mahr can be provided for cohabitation
5. Strong support for the wife is provided when her husband dies
6. Monopoly in the management of life is avoided (Fathian and Mahdavinooor, 2010).

To implement the above strategy, the government should take the following measures:

1. Determine the value of woman's work at home
2. Specify the share of man/woman to work at home for the family
3. Audit and balance the profit and loss in the family
4. Record changes in assets and liabilities of man/woman at the end of financial year
5. Facilitate the registration of family assets (Fathian and Mahdavinooor, 2010).



Conclusion

A man and a woman who get married obtain reciprocal rights that have been formulated by Holy Shari'a, but economic problems, cultural teachings, and the like cause these rights to be ignored. "Mahr" or "mahriyeh" in ancient times was considered the price of selling a wife to her husband. With the advent of divine religions and the formulation of laws, the nature of mahr has changed. In the current tradition of Iran, the concept of mahr for women has completely changed and it is no longer considered a gift; rather, mahr is the guarantee of marriage and the penalty of divorce or even the social value of women. According to the law, the husband must pay his debt for the mahr of his wife; however, due to its enormity, he is never able to pay it, or at the time of the wedding, he does not intend to pay at all, and if he is exceptionally able to pay the heavy mahr, he will somehow try to evade it. As a result, if the marriage is dissolved, the woman's life has no guarantee and is not protected by law and society. Social legal study on mahr, its historical roots, nature, reasons for determining large mahrs and corrupt consequences of heavy mahriyehs, it is necessary to change the mahr laws. If the mahr law is changed, other family laws must also be changed. In the intellectual framework of jurists who believe in following the rules of good and evil, it is possible to alter family laws, including mahr and the right to divorce.

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Exploring the Paths to the Attainment of Wisdom through an Examination of the Character of Luqman the Wise in the Qur'an and Hadith

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Abstract

The designation of an independent chapter bearing Luqman reflects the distinguished status of wisdom in Qur'anic thought and underscores the importance of Luqman's conduct as a concrete manifestation of wisdom realized within the human sphere. The present study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach and draws upon exegetical and narrational sources to explore the paths leading to the attainment of wisdom, with particular emphasis on the character and life conduct of Luqman the Wise. The findings indicate that, in the Qur'anic perspective, wisdom does not merely signify theoretical knowledge or intellectual skill; rather, it represents an existential reality and a divine illumination through which human beings attain profound insight, ethical rationality, and the capacity for balanced and just decision-making. An examination of the Qur'anic verses and narrations concerning Luqman reveals that his attainment of wisdom was the outcome of a gradual formative process grounded in monotheistic faith, conscious gratitude for divine blessings, humility, avoidance of arrogance and self-conceit, patience in the face of adversity, abstention from futile pursuits, and a practical commitment to moral virtues. Based on the analysis presented here, The final conclusion of this study is that, in Qur'anic thought, wisdom is not simply a sudden or purely bestowed endowment; rather, it constitutes a dynamic and educationally oriented process that becomes actualized through faith, righteous action, ethical self-discipline, and inner purification.

Keywords: Luqman; Wisdom; Holy Qur'an; Paths to the Attainment of Wisdom; Narrations; Character Analysis.

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Introduction

The concept of wisdom in the Holy Qur'an and in Islamic thought represents one of the most fundamental epistemic and educational principles and occupies a central position in explaining the process of human perfection. From the Qur'anic perspective, wisdom is a divine reality and a spiritual essence that grants human beings sound insight, the capacity to discern good from evil, and the ability to guide their conduct in accordance with divine rationality. In verse 269 of Surah al-Baqarah, God refers to wisdom as "abundant good" and attributes its bestowal to His will; yet this divine will is contingent upon certain capacities within human beings that arise through servitude, faith, piety, and purification of the soul, rather than being a random or universally distributed gift (Ali Balaei et al., 2021).

In religious sources, wisdom is not merely a form of theoretical knowledge; rather, it is an active, reformative, and effective force that guides human life and prevents deviation and descent into the realm of ignorance and heedlessness (Motahhari, 1989, vol. 6, pp. 203–205). The Holy Qur'an also establishes a close relationship between wisdom and concepts such as piety, moral purification, and rational reflection, presenting it as one of the essential factors in human guidance and spiritual elevation (Tabataba'i, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 320–322).

Among Qur'anic personalities, Luqman occupies a distinctive place. Although he is not introduced as a prophet, the Qur'an praises him with the attribute "wise" and dedicates an independent chapter to his name. The distinctive quality of Luqman lies in his conduct, speech, and ethical disposition; through sincere faith, gratitude, humility, patience, and avoidance of futile matters, he came to be recognized as a human being endowed with divine wisdom (Majlisi, 1936, vol. 13, p. 424; Tabarsi, 1959, vol. 8, p. 315). A narration attributed to Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) likewise emphasizes that Luqman attained wisdom not through wealth or noble lineage but through inner purity, vigilance over his actions, and restraint of his tongue (Tabarsi, 1968, vol. 8, pp. 316–317).

It is noteworthy that the Qur'an remains silent regarding Luqman's lineage and social background, thereby directing attention primarily to the existential nature of his character and his inner journey toward wisdom rather than to historical or social assumptions (Tabarsi, 1987, vol. 7, pp. 394–398; Tabari, 2001, vol. 21, pp. 40–45). From this perspective, the central question of the present study is how the paths to attaining wisdom are manifested in the character of Luqman and which ethical, doctrinal, and behavioral elements prepared the ground for his reception of this divine station. By relying on Qur'anic and narrational data, this analysis seeks to



present a practical and educational model of wisdom which—particularly within the framework of Islamic thought—may serve as a foundation for a renewed understanding of the process through which divine insight is realized in the human being and how spiritual and rational growth unfolds.

Research Background

An examination of previous research concerning wisdom and the character of Luqman the Wise shows that this field has long attracted the attention of scholars in Qur’anic studies, ethics, and Islamic education. Nevertheless, the orientation and analytical level of many of these studies differ substantially from the objective and research problem of the present work.

A considerable portion of earlier research has focused primarily on the educational and ethical dimensions of Luqman’s admonitions, paying particular attention to the pedagogical and normative functions of his counsel. For instance, Heydari (2009), concentrating on the educational teachings of Luqman in the Qur’an, analyzed pedagogical methods, the prioritization of concepts, and the distinction between the religious and social dimensions of education. Similarly, Molayi Parde and Mirdamadi (2016), in their analysis of the educational charter of Luqman the Wise, highlighted the religious and educational foundations underlying his admonitions. Although these studies have been successful in clarifying the importance of education from Luqman’s perspective, their emphasis lies mainly on the pedagogical outcomes of his advice rather than on explaining the process and foundations of attaining wisdom itself as an epistemic–practical achievement.

Other studies—such as the research conducted by Lamardi (2009), which analyzed Luqman’s admonitions as ten educational methods—have focused largely on pedagogical styles and methods for transmitting ethical concepts. Likewise, more applied studies such as that of Mousavi and Soleimani-Fard (2011), centered on a lifestyle derived from Luqman’s counsel, have categorized these teachings into doctrinal, ethical, and devotional patterns intended for organizing social life.

Despite their value, these approaches primarily address the behavioral order and social function of wisdom and devote comparatively less attention to its epistemological and existential roots. By contrast, the present study regards wisdom not merely as a behavioral outcome but as a foundational reality that shapes the ethical character of the human being.

On the other hand, several studies have approached wisdom from a theoretical perspective within Islamic teachings. For example, Ali Balaei et al. (2021) offered a comprehensive discussion of the concept of wisdom and proposed general strategies for attaining it in human life. Although such



studies have contributed to the theoretical enrichment of the topic, they often lack reliance on a concrete and lived model.

In contrast, the present research draws upon the figure of Luqman the Wise as a tangible Qur'anic exemplar of the wise human being and seeks to extract the practical and gradual paths leading to wisdom. This approach is supported by the distinctive position attributed to Luqman in exegetical literature and Islamic intellectual tradition (Tabataba'i, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 320–322; Motahhari, 1989, vol. 6, pp. 203–205).

Similarly, the study by Rabbani-Far and Rad (2013), which identified components of wise behavior in Qur'anic verses and narrations, focused primarily on describing the external manifestations of wisdom. In contrast, the central concern of the present research is not merely to enumerate behavioral indicators but to investigate the underlying causes and processes through which wisdom emerges and the pathway that leads to its attainment.

Accordingly, the originality of this study lies in adopting a combined analytical and narrational approach that, by relying on the concrete model of Luqman the Wise, seeks to bridge the gap between purely descriptive or theoretical studies and the need for a coherent and practical framework for realizing wisdom. Unlike many previous studies that have either confined themselves to abstract definitions of wisdom or examined Luqman's counsel merely as ethical exhortations, the present research endeavors to reinterpret Luqman's character, insight, and conduct as a practical and educational roadmap for attaining wisdom in human life—particularly within the context of contemporary society.

1. Character Analysis of Luqman the Wise: An Examination of Historical and Theological Data

What can be established with certainty from the Holy Qur'an regarding Luqman the Wise is the attribution of wisdom to him. His name is repeatedly mentioned in the revealed text as that of a noble exemplar, appearing in the sacred discourse as a model worthy of reflection, guidance, and instruction. This Qur'anic emphasis justifies the thematic focus of the present article, for its primary aim is not the reconstruction of historical events, but rather the extraction of practical principles from this divinely affirmed source of wisdom.

As is the case with many religious–historical figures, diverse accounts exist concerning the details of Luqman's life and origin. A survey of these narratives indicates that precise and definitive information about the stages of his life is not available. Nevertheless, what can be inferred with certainty from the Qur'an is the attribution of wisdom to him and the repeated



invocation of his name as a significant model for human guidance and education.

According to reports preserved by Islamic scholars, Luqman was an Abyssinian slave during the time of Prophet David (peace be upon him) (Ibn Kathir, 1407 AH, p. 142; al-Suyuti, 1404 AH, vol. 5, p. 160). Another view identifies him as the son of the sister of Prophet Job (peace be upon him) (Qurashi, 1975, vol. 6, p. 201). Notably, his emancipation from slavery is reported to have occurred as a consequence of his knowledge and wisdom (Ibn Qutaybah, 1992, p. 55).

A well-known narration concerning the occasion of his freedom relates that his master instructed him to plant sesame, yet Luqman planted barley instead. When the master objected, Luqman responded with a wise and reasoned analogy: just as the master hoped for Paradise while disobeying divine commands, he too had hoped for sesame to grow from barley. This deeply insightful remark moved the master to tears and resulted in Luqman's liberation (Ashkuri, 2003, vol. 1, p. 197).

Further affirmation of his origin is found in the words of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), who stated: "Luqman the Wise was an Abyssinian slave" (Nuri, 1408 AH, vol. 16, p. 26), reinforcing the view of his Abyssinian background. Regarding his occupation, the more prevalent opinion is that he worked as a carpenter (al-Suyuti, 1404 AH, vol. 5, p. 160).

Ultimately, the diversity of historical details indicates that the purpose of presenting the story of Luqman in the Qur'an is not the documentation of his biography, but the guidance and instruction of humanity through his wise counsels. The path and method of Luqman offer a model capable of guiding human beings toward perfection and felicity in both worldly and spiritual life.

2. Conceptual Analysis of Wisdom: From Etymological Roots to Qur'anic and Narrative Manifestation

The most central attribute associated with Luqman the Wise is that of *wisdom* (ḥikmah), a quality that occupies a fundamental place within religious texts. Understanding the path toward attaining such wisdom therefore requires a precise conceptual clarification of this foundational term. Accordingly, the first step in this study involves an examination of the linguistic roots and terminological meanings of the concept of wisdom.

In Arabic, the term *ḥikmah* is derived from the root *ḥakama*, a root that encompasses a range of meanings. One of the most fundamental meanings associated with this root is that of prevention or restraint (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH, vol. 2, p. 88). This notion of "restraint," however, does not merely carry a negative or prohibitive sense; rather, it functions in a corrective and



reformative manner. It signifies the prevention of defective actions and the guidance of behavior toward rectitude and soundness—much like a bridle restrains a horse from uncontrolled movement (Farāhīdī, 1405 AH, vol. 3, p. 66). Within the sphere of human knowledge and conduct, any form of knowledge that prevents an individual from engaging in reprehensible actions may therefore be regarded as an instance of wisdom (Rāghib al-Isfahānī, 1385, p. 348).

Beyond this central meaning, several additional definitions of wisdom have been proposed, each contributing to the conceptual depth of the term. Among these is the idea of placing every matter in its proper and appropriate position (Jurjānī, 1978, vol. 1, p. 97), a definition that emphasizes order, balance, and precision in both thought and action. Likewise, wisdom has been described as speech that is rational, measured, and free from unnecessary verbosity or embellishment (Jurjānī, 1978, vol. 1, p. 96).

Within the Qur’anic discourse, the root *h-k-m* appears more than one hundred times. In these contexts, its predominant usage tends toward the meanings of preventing error and establishing firmness and soundness. In this sense, wisdom refers to a form of knowledge that is safeguarded from mistake and that leads to the strengthening of thought while distancing its possessor from ignorance, folly, and reprehensible behavior. In his exegesis, Allama Tabataba’i interprets the concept of wisdom in Qur’an 2:269 in a broader sense, defining it as everything that corresponds with truth and reality and guarantees human felicity. Such a definition implies that wisdom encompasses foundational doctrinal matters—such as belief in the Hereafter and the innate principles underlying divine legislation. Teachings such as the prohibition of polytheism, extravagance in expenditure, unlawful killing, arrogance, and the consumption of the property of orphans (Qur’an 17:22–39) may therefore be understood as practical manifestations of this reality-oriented wisdom.

In religious terminology, wisdom transcends the boundaries of purely theoretical knowledge and is defined as a profound understanding of truth attained in the light of faith—an understanding that must ultimately manifest itself in an individual’s practical conduct. For this reason, the Qur’an frequently mentions wisdom alongside the revealed Book: “and what He has sent down to you of the Book and the Wisdom” (Qur’an 2:231). Likewise, in the hadith literature, wisdom is described in operational and practical terms, encompassing obedience to God, recognition of the Imam, deep understanding of religion (*tafaqquh fi al-dīn*), and avoidance of major sins (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 24, p. 86; vol. 1, p. 215; Kulayni, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 22). At this level, wisdom stands in



direct opposition to the domination of base desires, self-centered inclinations, and corruption (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 1, p. 11).

This structural analysis indicates that the wisdom attributed to Luqman represents a synthesis of three dimensions: intellectual soundness rooted in its linguistic origin, conformity with reality as reflected in the Qur'anic conception, and manifestation in reformative conduct as articulated in the hadith tradition. These three interrelated dimensions constitute the analytical framework of the present study.

3. The Operational Strategies of Luqman the Wise: The Path to Attaining Wisdom from the Perspective of the Qur'anic–Narrative Tradition

The Holy Qur'an explicitly affirms the bestowal of the gift of wisdom upon Luqman (Qur'an 31:12). This endowment may be understood as the direct outcome of the cultivation of ethical, spiritual, and intellectual virtues throughout his personal life. Such an approach establishes Luqman as a practical model, indicating that elevated levels of knowledge and insight are the result of the cumulative effect of purposeful actions and conscious choices. Consequently, these levels remain attainable for any individual who seeks to follow his path. The aim of this section is therefore to identify and analyze the precise doctrinal, behavioral, and social strategies that elevated Luqman's character to the heights of human perfection and led to the immortalization of his name in the divine scripture. These strategies may be regarded as a roadmap for attaining the highest degrees of wisdom.

3.1 Foundational Doctrinal Characteristics in the Realization of Wisdom

An examination of the theoretical foundations underlying the wisdom granted to Luqman—as articulated with precision in verse 12 of Sūrah Luqman—reveals that this divine gift is inseparably connected to two central doctrinal pillars: faith in the One God and a firm belief in the Hereafter. These elements are not merely the outward consequences of wisdom; rather, they function as essential conditions and prerequisites for its genuine realization and formation. In other words, the wisdom bestowed upon Luqman represents the manifestation of monotheism and belief in life after death, crystallizing within a framework of firm convictions that facilitate both the comprehension of truth and the enactment of wise conduct. An analysis of these doctrinal components demonstrates the pivotal role of faith and eschatological belief in the formation of wisdom, emphasizing the dynamic interaction between foundational beliefs and the attainment of higher knowledge. The following discussion examines these essential doctrinal characteristics and the specific role each plays in guiding the development of wisdom.



3.1.1 Monotheism as the Foundational Infrastructure of Wisdom

Monotheism (*tawḥīd*), as the most fundamental epistemological and ontological principle within the Qur’anic worldview, is presented not merely as a theological belief but as the foundational infrastructure for the formation and realization of wisdom. From this perspective, the bestowal of wisdom upon Luqman—according to the explicit statement of the verse, “And We certainly granted Luqman wisdom, [saying], ‘Give thanks to God’” (Qur’an 31:12)—is established upon a foundation whose two essential pillars are monotheistic faith and continual gratitude. These two elements function as necessary preconditions for the growth of wisdom and maintain a purposeful causal relationship with one another, forming a distinctive epistemic–existential structure. Within this structure, faith becomes the source of knowledge, knowledge generates gratitude, and gratitude in turn becomes the ground for the emergence of wisdom.

The analysis offered by Allama Tabataba’i (1375 AH, vol. 16, pp. 390–392) articulates precisely such a hierarchy. He regards gratitude as the fruit of knowledge and knowledge itself as dependent upon faith. Wisdom thus appears as the final outcome of an ordered inner process that begins with monotheistic faith and culminates in the development of enduring dispositions of gratitude and conscious awareness before the One Lord. Similarly, Rashid Rida (1414 AH, vol. 20, pp. 180–182), emphasizing that gratitude constitutes a practical acknowledgment of divine lordship and creatorship, argues that gratitude is not merely an inner emotional state but an ethical force that dismantles human arrogance and self-sufficiency, thereby preparing the ground for humility and receptivity to truth. Such humility is an indispensable condition for the emergence of wisdom.

Within this same logical framework, the first counsel that Luqman offers to his son is not primarily a moral or behavioral directive but a foundational affirmation of the rejection of all forms of association with God: “O my son, do not associate anything with God; indeed, association with Him is a great injustice” (Qur’an 31:13). The precedence of this principle demonstrates that the realization of wisdom is impossible without monotheism. Polytheism is not merely an intellectual error in belief; it constitutes a profound disruption within the existential and moral structure of the human being. Scholars such as Jawadi Amoli (2004, p. 298) and Subhani (1413 AH, vol. 1, p. 372) describe polytheism as a factor that undermines the ethical order and distorts the innate disposition (*fiṭrah*) of the human being. Dependence upon entities other than God distances the individual from his existential center and subjects him to the domination of transient attachments and limited powers.



The Qur'an further elucidates this reality through the concept of the nullification of deeds (*ḥaḍḥ al-a'māl*) (Qur'an 14:18). Actions that lack a monotheistic foundation—even if outwardly commendable—ultimately become devoid of value within the divine moral order. Polytheism thus resembles a consuming fire that destroys spiritual capital and even the moral motivations underlying human conduct.

The Qur'anic statement “Indeed, association with God is a great injustice” (Qur'an 31:13) indicates that polytheism, before being an injustice against God, is fundamentally an injustice against the very reality of the human being. Humanity was created to connect with the infinite source of existence, yet by attributing lordship to finite beings, individuals obstruct their own path to perfection and entangle their souls in a web of conflicting and limited dependencies. The Qur'an characterizes polytheism as an unforgivable sin (Qur'an 4:48), the foremost prohibition (Qur'an 6:151), and a condition that enables the domination of Satan (Qur'an 16:100). These verses, together with the vivid depiction presented in Qur'an 39:29—contrasting the fragmented personality of the polytheist with the existential unity of the monotheist—demonstrate that polytheism produces fragmentation of the self, existential anxiety, and the absence of a stable orientation in life. Such conditions fundamentally contradict the nature of wisdom, which requires stability, inner coherence, and integrated understanding.

The monotheist, by centering existence upon the One God, attains inner coherence and epistemic tranquility. This stability enables a clearer perception of reality and a more balanced judgment in life's affairs. A narration from Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), stating that “no deed is accepted in the presence of polytheism” (Huwayzi, vol. 4, p. 497), expresses this principle in the form of an existential law: an action not grounded in monotheism lacks spirit, direction, and genuine consequence within the divine order and is therefore rendered void (Makarem Shirazi, 1988, vol. 19, p. 527). Because polytheism destroys the foundational orientation of human existence, it simultaneously undermines the human capacity to perceive truth and receive wisdom.

An analysis of the Qur'anic epistemic framework and the narrative of Luqman's life demonstrates that monotheism constitutes the ontological and cognitive foundation of wisdom. In its authentic sense, wisdom is not merely intellectual knowledge or rational skill; rather, it is the existential embodiment of divine knowledge within the human being—knowledge that originates from unity with the ultimate source of existence and culminates in a harmonious perception of both the cosmos and the human condition. In this sense, a human being attains the rank of wisdom only



when all dimensions of existence—intellect, will, and emotion—are unified under the light of divine unity.

Thus, monotheism is not the result of wisdom but its necessary condition. Without the rejection of polytheism, knowledge becomes conceptually fragmented and action becomes morally unstable. The monotheistic individual becomes wise precisely because the unity of God is reflected in perception, intention, and conduct. In other words, monotheism constitutes both the form of theoretical reason—by explaining the unified structure of existence—and the spirit of practical reason—by generating coherence and harmony within human motivation. Ultimately, the life of Luqman represents a concrete embodiment of this Qur’anic principle: only through the light of monotheism can human beings transcend the level of propositional knowledge and reach the deeper station of perceiving unity and realizing wisdom. Luqman’s wisdom thus represents the living manifestation of a form of rationality centered upon God—a rationality that guides humanity from dispersion within multiplicity toward tranquility within unity, and thereby leads the human being toward a fuller encounter with truth.

3.1.2 Belief in the Hereafter (Eschatological Orientation)

In the ethical and intellectual legacy of Luqman the Wise, following the emphasis on monotheism and the avoidance of polytheism, another vital dimension of doctrinal belief emerges—one that plays a fundamental role in attaining wisdom: belief in the Resurrection and the life of the Hereafter. Luqman teaches his son that a proper understanding of the Hereafter not only prevents deviation toward polytheism but, more fundamentally, enables human beings to perceive truth and attain wisdom. This teaching is clearly reflected in verse 16 of Sūrah Luqman: *“O my son, if it should be the weight of a mustard seed and it were hidden in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, God will bring it forth; indeed, God is Subtle and All-Aware.”*

By referring to the minute mustard seed—symbolizing the smallest and most concealed human actions—Luqman emphasizes that no deed, however insignificant or hidden, escapes the knowledge of God. Just as the Divine, described as *Latīf* (Subtle) and *Khabīr* (All-Aware), can bring forth that tiny seed from within a rock or from the depths of the heavens or the earth, so too will every human action, whether good or evil, be recorded and brought forth for judgment on the Day of Resurrection (Makarem Shirazi, 2001, vol. 17, p. 51). Awareness that God possesses complete knowledge of all human actions—even the most concealed—creates a powerful motivation for vigilance in conduct and for the ethical reform of both the individual and society.



After establishing the doctrinal foundation of monotheism, Luqman reinforces his instruction by reminding his son of the reality of the Hereafter, conveying a clear message not only to him but also to all believers: no action performed in this world remains without consequence or accountability. This principle is consistent with Qur'an 6:59, which declares: "*With Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him... and not a grain in the darkness of the earth but that it is recorded in a clear register,*" as well as Qur'an 34:3: "*Knower of the unseen—nothing escapes Him, even the weight of an atom.*" Both verses affirm God's absolute knowledge of all hidden and manifest realities. Likewise, Qur'an 74:38 states: "*Every soul is held in pledge for what it has earned,*" emphasizing that each individual is ultimately bound to the consequences of his or her deeds.

Through this reminder of the accountability of human actions in the Hereafter, Luqman seeks to instill in his son the understanding that worldly life is transient and serves as a field of cultivation for the life to come. This idea is eloquently expressed in a narration recorded by al-Daylami (1408 AH, p. 93), in which Luqman advises his son: "*O my son, from the moment you emerged from your mother's womb, you turned your back on this world and faced the Hereafter; thus you now stand between two abodes.*" The phrase "*you turned your back on the world and faced the Hereafter*" conveys the profound notion that from the moment of birth, the human journey toward the Hereafter has already begun, while worldly life constitutes merely a transitional stage. This Qur'anic teaching is further reflected in verse 77 of Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ: "*Seek, through what God has granted you, the abode of the Hereafter, but do not forget your share of this world.*" The verse underscores the priority of striving for the eternal abode while maintaining a balanced engagement with worldly life. The world, in this perspective, functions as a field in which one cultivates the harvest of the Hereafter.

Islamic narrations also identify the sources of Luqman's wisdom as *ṣidq al-yaqīn* (the sincerity or firmness of certainty) and *kathrat al-fikr* (abundance of reflection) (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 13, p. 424). This suggests that continual contemplation of the Hereafter and firm conviction in its reality played a central role in shaping Luqman's wise outlook. Consequently, attaining the station of wisdom requires that human beings treat worldly affairs as a bridge leading toward eternal felicity. Before one's deeds are brought before divine justice for reckoning, one must consciously choose—through reflection and righteous action—the path that leads to light and ultimate prosperity. The remembrance of death and the Hereafter thus functions as a primary motivation for righteous conduct and avoidance



of deviation, guiding the human being toward the realization of authentic wisdom.

3.2 Practical and Behavioral Components in the Realization of Wisdom

Within Qur'anic teachings, the character of Luqman the Wise represents a complete model of practical wisdom and ethics grounded in monotheism. A systematic analysis of his behavior, counsel, and intellectual framework shows that two fundamental principles—trust in God (*tawakkul*) and patience (*ṣabr*)—play a central role in shaping his psychological, cognitive, and behavioral structure. In Luqman's tradition, these two principles do not appear as isolated or independent virtues; rather, they function as integrated and harmonized rational-spiritual mechanisms that create the internal and external conditions necessary for the realization of practical wisdom. This study seeks to demonstrate that *tawakkul* and *ṣabr*, within the existential structure of Luqman, operate as functional forces that generate coherence among his cognition, will, and action. Thus, these virtues are not merely inner emotional states; they are active instruments in the process of forming wisdom. By cultivating inner stability, enhancing discernment, and strengthening perseverance in action, they prepare the human being to understand and embody wisdom in the practical contexts of life.

3.2.1 Tawakkul and its Role in the Realization of Wisdom

Within the epistemic framework of the Qur'an, *tawakkul* is neither an ephemeral emotional condition nor a moral slogan; it is a structured form of knowledge concerning the divine causal and governing order of the universe. *Tawakkul*, therefore, arises from perceiving the unity-based nature of existence and from consciously accepting God's lordship in the unfolding of events. Through this monotheistic understanding, Luqman elevated wisdom beyond theoretical cognition and actualized it in the realms of action, decision-making, and the management of daily life. In other words, *tawakkul* in the tradition of Luqman serves as the bridge between monotheistic understanding and practical rationality.

Allama Tabataba'i, in his elaboration on the role of faith in divine governance, regards *tawakkul* as the source of "existential assurance"—a state of inner security that prevents psychological collapse in situations of crisis and conflict (Tabataba'i, 1375 AH, vol. 19, p. 347). This analysis highlights *tawakkul* as a cognitive-psychological mechanism that guarantees inner stability and thereby enables balanced judgment and wise behavior. The Qur'anic verse "*And whoever puts his trust in God, He is sufficient for him*" (Qur'an 65:3) reflects precisely this meaning. *Tawakkul*,



in this verse, is presented as a conscious and active human act, not as passivity, abandonment of effort, or suspension of practical reason.

A person who practices *tawakkul* does not abandon planning, nor does he render reason inactive. Rather, he employs his intellect within the horizon of trust in God's governance. From this perspective, *tawakkul* within the structure of Luqman's wisdom becomes a condition for rational behavior. The person who trusts in God, by recognizing the limits of his own knowledge and power, distances himself from epistemic self-sufficiency and organizes decision-making through a balance between rational calculation and faith-based trust. This equilibrium constitutes the point at which practical reason is safeguarded from descending into self-centeredness, and faith is protected from slipping into fatalism. Thus, *tawakkul* is not the negation of reason but the correction of the horizon of rationality—a horizon in which human agency is affirmed but is simultaneously understood within the overarching will of God.

Although the term *tawakkul* is not explicitly mentioned in the verses concerning Luqman, the substance of his counsel—particularly his instruction regarding *commanding good and forbidding wrong* (Qur'an 31:17)—clearly indicates an inner reliance upon God. Such actions, owing to their social cost and ethical risks, cannot be performed without depending on divine assistance and sufficiency. For this reason, a narration attributed to Luqman states: "*O my son, place your trust in God, the Mighty and Majestic... for who is it that has relied on God and He has not sufficed him?*" (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 68, p. 156). This teaching presents *tawakkul* as a relocation of the center of confidence—from the limited human to the limitless Divine. The effects of this shift manifest directly in psychological tranquility, ethical stability, and courage in social engagement.

From an analytical perspective, *tawakkul* represents a form of cognitive and psychological training that reconstitutes the inner coherence of the human being. When confronting the uncertainties and unpredictabilities of the world of action, the person who practices *tawakkul* does not fall into existential anxiety; rather, he adopts a theological horizon as the basis for interpreting lived experience. This re-orientation does not imply denying danger or suffering; instead, it means understanding them within the framework of divine wisdom. Thus, within the Qur'anic tradition, Luqman is presented as the archetype of a form of rationality in which faith becomes the anchor of reason, and *tawakkul* becomes the condition for the actualization of wisdom in the lived realities of life.



3.2.2 Patience and Its Role in the Realization of Wisdom

Within the ethical and behavioral framework of Luqman the Wise, patience (ṣabr) is not merely a defensive reaction to suffering and adversity; rather, it represents a conscious and guided strategy for regulating emotions, strengthening the will, and directing practical reason toward wise ends. The Qur'anic command, "*And be patient over what befalls you*" (Qur'an 31:17), by placing patience among "*the matters requiring firm resolve*" (*'azm al-umūr*), situates it among the highest forms of moral decision grounded in insight and deliberate choice. Such decisions arise not from compulsion but from rational discernment and voluntary commitment. In this sense, patience in Luqman's teaching constitutes a voluntary and responsible act that plays a fundamental role in the process of realizing wisdom.

From the perspective of moral psychology grounded in Islamic teachings, patience may be understood as a form of rational self-restraint based on awareness of the divine wisdom underlying delay, trial, and the gradual unfolding of human perfection. Within this framework, patience does not signify the denial of suffering nor passive submission to it. Rather, it reflects the capacity of practical reason to restrain impulsive reactions and suspend immediate judgments in pursuit of a higher and more meaningful end. This very characteristic aligns patience, within the logic of Luqmanic wisdom, with the notion of "moral rationality" in practical philosophy—a rationality defined by prioritizing enduring good over temporary pleasure or the immediate avoidance of hardship.

The Qur'anic expression describing the reward of the patient—"*Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured*" (Qur'an 13:24)—points to an existential acceptance of the path of trial and a recognition of the human being's conscious choice in confronting difficulties. This "peace" is not merely a promise of reward in the Hereafter; it also signifies the attainment of a form of inner equilibrium and existential reconciliation with the wise order of the universe. Norouzi and colleagues (2016), adopting a developmental perspective, likewise describe patience as a process through which the individual evolves from "reactive endurance" to "conscious perseverance." Such a transformation illustrates that patience, within the Qur'anic framework, is not an instrument of passive adaptation to circumstances but rather an educational path for inner reconstruction, the consolidation of moral character, and the attainment of wisdom.

In addition to patience, narrative sources identify a number of behavioral virtues as signs and preparatory conditions for the growth of wisdom. Each of these virtues functions as an ethical discipline that prepares the human heart and intellect for receiving wisdom. Among them



is ascetic restraint (*zuhd*), understood as a non-possessive outlook toward the world and a liberation of the soul from excessive attachments (Kulayni, 2008, vol. 2, p. 128; Ibn Shu‘bah al-Harrani, p. 58; Daylami, 1408 AH, p. 194). Silence, as a discipline of controlling the tongue and avoiding fruitless speech, also plays an essential role in inner purification (Kulayni, 2008, vol. 2, p. 113). Fasting, as a practice of spiritual discipline and purification of the self, is likewise presented as a means of strengthening inner insight and readiness for wisdom (Daylami, 1989, vol. 1, p. 203). Truthfulness, reflecting sincerity in intention and speech, creates the conditions for the opening of the heart and receptivity to truth (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 1, pp. 215–216). Together, these virtues demonstrate that within the logic of Islamic thought, wisdom emerges within a purified inner being and a disciplined will; it cannot coexist with ethical corruption or instability of character.

A comparative analysis of Qur’anic teachings and narrative sources indicates that within the character of Luqman, patience, trust in God, and other ethical virtues stand in a structural and complementary relationship with one another. Trust in God provides the cognitive foundation for inner tranquility and confidence in divine governance, while patience represents the concrete behavioral expression of that trust within lived experience. From the perspective of the Qur’an’s moral ontology, *tawakkul* elevates the human outlook from scattered and apparent causes to the ultimate cause of all causes, and patience becomes the natural consequence of such a worldview. A person who perceives the universe as imbued with meaning, order, and divine governance does not experience a collapse of will or ethical disintegration when confronted with adversity.

In light of this analysis, Luqman the Wise emerges as a comprehensive model of the integration of faith, rationality, and ethics. In his tradition, *tawakkul* represents the form of knowledge that organizes the center of human trust, while patience constitutes the practical manifestation of this knowledge in the realm of human action and lived existence. Accordingly, within the system of Qur’anic wisdom, patience and trust in God are not separate ethical virtues; rather, they are indicators of spiritual self-governance and fundamental instruments on the path toward human perfection and the realization of wisdom.



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Peace in the Holy Qur'an from the Perspective of Mysticism

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Abstract

The concept of peace in the Holy Qur'an is one of the most profound mystical and ethical concepts, derived from divine names and attributes. Beyond its literal meaning of greeting and peace, this word, in its deeper meaning, symbolizes health, tranquility, and the attainment of a state of submission to the divine will. From the perspective of Islamic Sufis, "peace" is not merely a verbal word. Rather, it is a manifestation of the divine name "Peace" within the believer's soul; the very light that liberates the seeker from worldly fears and sorrows, leading them to the abode of peace, that is, the abode of divine security. This research, employing an analytical-example methodology, seeks to explore the epistemological and existential dimensions of the concept of greeting and demonstrate its relationship to Islamic mysticism. Peace is a vital requirement of life, something inherently loved by humankind, as it is essential for the establishment of religious affairs and the proper functioning of worldly matters. Therefore, all religions agree on the necessity of preserving security and peace among individuals, families, and societies, and on promoting respect for human rights throughout the world. Indeed, the Holy Qur'an and the pure progeny of the Prophet (pbuh) have the distinction of being the first to establish the foundations of such virtuous ethics, advocating for them and urging their practice, both theoretically and practically.

Keywords: The Holy Qur'an, Peace, Gnosis, Sufism.

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Statement of the Problem

The topic «peace» One of the fundamental concepts in the Holy Qur'an, which is presented at first glance as a greeting and a sign of peace and security among people; however, upon contemplating the divine verses and Sufi analyses, it becomes clear that peace is a reality that transcends a mere social term. At its core, it signifies inner well-being, existential peace, and the attainment of a state of surrender and contentment before the divine will.

Therefore, the central question of this research is: “What is the place of peace in the Holy Qur'an within the epistemological and mystical framework of Islam, and how is it existentially linked to the concept of divine peace?” Exploring this question leads us to discover humanity's journey from the outward appearance of Islamic law to the inner essence of truth, and from the outward appearance of Islam to its inner reality.

Research objective

The main objective of this research is to explain and analyze the concept of the peace. As one of the manifestations of the Most Beautiful Names of God, and to clarify its role in the human spiritual journey, this research attempts to uncover the relationship between peace, surrender, and tranquility, relying on Qur'anic, exegetical, and Sufi sources. It demonstrates how the Holy Qur'an considers peace not only the ultimate goal of faith, but also the ultimate goal of knowledge, leading the researcher to a safe and stable haven of tranquility. (And classical works of Islamic Sufism, such as *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah* and *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyah*.)

Research Methodology

This research employs an analytical and citational approach, relying on a thematic interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and a conceptual comparison between exegetical and esoteric texts. Data was extracted from reliable Qur'anic sources and authoritative commentaries (such as *Al-Mizan* and *Majma' al-Bayan al-Ma'nawi*). A library-based methodology was used for data collection and text analysis to clarify the relationship between the two.

«peace» By divine names, submission, tranquility, and the abode of peace, based on narrative and argumentative evidence. This approach was used for the purpose of comparative interpretation of meaning «peace» Its function in both the Qur'anic and esoteric realms is to clarify the trajectory of its semantic development from the emergence of Islamic law to its esoteric reality.

The sources were selected based on their scholarly credibility, mystical depth, and direct relevance to the theme of peace. The references are arranged according to the journal's style (verse number in the text, Latin equivalent of the author's name in the footnote).



Background of the study

Most Qur'anic studies on the subject «peace». It adopted a lexicographical and interpretive approach, but did not adequately address its mystical aspects. In the commentaries al-Mizan and Majma' al-Bayan, peace is considered a sign of security and mercy for believers, and in the works of Sufi works such as Ibn Arabi's *Futūḥāt al-Fuḥāt* and al-Qushayri's *Risālah* are considered manifestations of the name "Peace" in human existence. However, a comprehensive and comparative study of these two fields has not yet been presented, and this article seeks to fill this scholarly gap.

In a coherent manner, however, few studies have coherently explained the comparative relationship between the Qur'an and Sufism on the subject «peace» The innovation of this study lies in this approach: demonstrating the relationship Islam → Faith → Sufism → Submission → Trust « peace» And clarifying « *Dar al-Salam* » as the goal of the Sufi journey.

The Origin of the Word «Salam» and its Qur'anic and Mystical Meanings

The word peace is derived from the root *salama* which literally means health and safety from harm and deficiency. Ibn Manzur says in *Lisan al-Arab*: Peace be upon the sick, and upon the healthy one who is safe from harm (Ibn Manzur, vol. 7, p. 326).

In this sense, peace refers to purity from all disturbance and harm, whether in the physical or spiritual and moral dimensions. In Qur'anic culture, this word divine perfection, becoming a manifestation of mercy and tranquility in the transcends its purely literal meaning to become a sacred and existential concept; peace is not merely a description of creation, but also one of the beautiful names of God. (He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the the) (Hashr: 23). Thus, peace expresses a manifestation of divine perfection, becoming a manifestation of mercy and tranquility in the existential order of the world.

The Qur'anic meaning of peace

Peace in the Holy Qur'an has multiple meanings, ranging from a verbal greeting to an existential reality. Its outward appearance signifies courtesy, while its inner meaning is a divine word that embodies affection. (And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.) (Nisá: 86) God's mercy descends upon the hearts of the believers: ("Peace," a word from a Merciful Lord) (Ya-Sin: 58).

Finally, « peace » is the entry of man into the safe realm of God: « What is meant by peace is the security and tranquility that God has made for His believing servants in the abode of mercy. (Tabatabai, v. 13, 124)



In other words, peace is the peace that descends upon the human heart through God's mercy. From this perspective, peace in the Qur'an is not merely a word, but rather the transition of humanity from multiplicity to unity. Unity is the journey from anxiety to trust, from fear to security; it is the same path that begins in Islamic mysticism with surrender and ends in the abode of peace.

Peace in the Holy Qur'an is a multifaceted word, possessing a social dimension, a sacred dimension, and an existential dimension. The Holy Qur'an uses this word with various meanings, all of which ultimately revolve around the themes of peace, security, and divine mercy.

Peace is a greeting of faith

In the Holy Verse : (And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.) (Nisá: 86)

God commands believers to respond with the best of greetings. This verse is the foundation of Islamic etiquette and a testament to the spirit of humility and love within the community of believers, for peace is a means of uniting hearts and an invitation to security and purity. Commentators have stated that peace in this context is a religious greeting, derived from the divine name *Salam* (The «Peace». Every greeting is a remembrance of God, and every response to it is a divine remembrance. It has been recorded. The meaning of the verse:« When you are greeted with a greeting, respond with one better than it or at least return it.» From an inner perspective, this verbal greeting is a sign of a heartfelt greeting, because the believer greets with his tongue, but its true essence stems from the tranquility of the heart. If peace settles in the heart of the one asking, then peace will flow from his tongue.

Peace as a message of divine mercy

On a higher level, peace in the Qur'an is a direct divine message to believers; ([And] «Peace,» a word from a Merciful Lord) (Ya-Sin: 58). That is: Peace is a word from a Merciful Lord.» In this verse, peace does not originate from the tongues of the servants, but from the Merciful Lord; this is evidence of divine acceptance and approval. Allamah Tabatabai states in *Al-Mizan* that the meaning of this peace is the objective realization of God's mercy in the hearts of the believers, and not merely a word is⁽²⁾ (This means that believers in Paradise (Tabatabai, vol. 18, p. 108.).

Peace is its essence. From an esoteric perspective, this verse refers to the same divine manifestation that descends upon the heart of the seeker; as if a call comes from the unseen: O tranquil heart, in safety. This is the state that the Sufis interpreted as “peace of the heart”—the state in which the soul is freed from fear and sorrow and attains peace.



Peace is one of the manifestations of peace in Paradise :

The Holy Qur'an describes "peace" in several verses as a description of Paradise and the spiritual atmosphere of the believers (Having been told], Enter it in peace, safe [and secure] .) (Hijr: 46) - (For them will be the Home of Peace with their Lord. And He will be their protecting friend because of what they used to do.) (An'am: 127) –(They will not hear therein ill speech or commission of sin) (Waqiah: 25-26) The meaning of the verses: "Enter Paradise in safety" and "For them is the abode of peace with their Lord." The interpretation of Majma' al-Bayan states that the abode of peace is Paradise, which is the ultimate tranquility for the souls of the believers, where there is neither fear nor sorrow.

Commentators have explained that peace in these verses symbolizes existential security and eternal mercy. From an esoteric perspective, and through attaining inner contentment, one enters spiritual paradise; a paradise where the abode of peace represents the ideal image of the previous state of divine closeness, that is, when a person departs this world having truly accepted death in the heart of the seeker. (Tabarsi, vol. 4, p. 229)

The analysis of the verses and interpretations shows that peace in the Holy Qur'an has three functions :

1. A verbal greeting (at the level of the community of believers(1-
2. A divine greeting (at the level of the relationship between the servant and his Lord. Existential peace (in the Hereafter and the abode of peace(
3. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an describes the end of the believer's journey as peace: (Their call therein will be, "Exalted are You, O Allah," and their greeting therein will be, "Peace." And the last of their call will be, "Praise to Allah, Lord of the worlds!") (Yunus: 10) Because the beginning and end of a believer's life is in peace and within peace.

The inner meaning of peace

In Islamic mysticism, "peace" is a state and a stage in the spiritual path, in which the seeker is liberated from the inner conflict of the self and the duality of the soul, and attains existential security and tranquility. Al-Qushayri says in his Epistle: "If the servant's heart is free from evil, hypocrisy, and deceit, the Truth (Qushayri, p. 67) calls him 'Peace.'"

Ibn Arabi says in *Al-Futuh al-Makkiya*: "The perfect human being is the

reflection of God's name, As-Salam (The Peace). Whoever sees him is safe from evil." (Ibn Arabi, vol. 2, p. 321). That is, the perfect human being is the manifestation of the name "As-Salam," and in light of this manifestation, he is safe from harm and evil. In Sufism, peace is not a greeting, but rather a state of being in which the seeker finds security from



all other than the Truth and settles in the absolute presence of the Truth. It is a state of annihilation and subsistence in God.

The relationship between the Qur'anic meaning and the Sufi meaning of the word "peace"

A comparative analysis of the Qur'anic and Sufi perspectives reveals that both stem from a single truth: the Qur'anic word peace is based on the axis of security and mercy, while the Sufi word "peace" is based on the axis of surrender and annihilation; both are derived from the divine name *Al-Salam* (The Peace). In fact, Islamic Sufism is the esoteric interpretation of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an; and peace is the point of convergence between these two realms: in the Holy Qur'an, the ultimate goal of the believer's journey is to enter the abode of peace, and in Sufism, the ultimate goal of the seeker's journey is to attain a state of tranquility and to die in peace. As the Holy Qur'an states [To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul,) (Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him],) (And enter among My [righteous] servants) (And enter My Paradise.)" (Fajr: 27-30). In Sufi interpretation, "the return" is the return of the soul to the abode of peace and divine communion.

Greetings as a Manifestation of the Beautiful Names of God:

Peace in the Holy Qur'an is not merely a greeting between believers, but also a reflection of divine names. God Almighty says in describing it(He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the the) (Ḥashr 23).

The meaning of the verse is: "He is Allah, besides Whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Giver of Faith, the Guardian." Thus, Peace is one of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah, and it is the origin of all goodness and security in the universe. From an esoteric perspective, the manifestation of this Name in the universe is the foundation of peace and security at all levels of creation. Human beings, as God's vicegerents, can be a manifestation of this Name; therefore, they are tasked with "proclaiming peace" and demonstrating the attribute of peace in their relationships with others

Peace is a divine attribute:

In the Holy Verse (He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the the) (Ḥashr: 23) The word "peace" is presented as one of the beautiful names of God. Allamah Tabatabai says in *Mizan*: "Peace is that which is free from all deficiency and imperfection in its essence, and all peace in the world is derived from it." (Tabatabai, vol. 19, p. 237.) That is, God is absolute existence, free from all deficiency and imperfection, and all peace and security in the world is a ray from Him. From a Sufi perspective, this meaning refers to "existential peace"; that is,



existence in a pure state, free from multiplicity and distortion Ibn Arabi says in the Meccan Revelations: "All good and all security in the world is but a manifestation of the name of Peace in appearances." (Ibn Arabi, vol. 2, p. 321) From this perspective, the name "Peace" is the origin of all good and the source of security in existence. Consequently, "Peace," in its essential aspect, is an intrinsic attribute, not an action, because it

refers to existence itself, not to divine actions. However, in its manifestational aspect This peace manifests itself in the various levels of creation as mercy, kindness, and tranquility in the hearts of believers. Therefore, peace is an attribute of God and a path for humanity to attain it, for it originates from Him and returns to Him: He is peace, from Him comes peace, and to Him returns peace.

Greeting as a divine command

God has commanded believers to spread the quality of peace in their relationships (And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.) (Nisá: 86): "When you are greeted with a greeting, respond with one better than it or at least return it." This Qur'anic command is an invitation to strengthen security and tranquility in society. The Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said: "Spread peace among yourselves so that you may love one another." From an esoteric perspective, the command to greet in the Qur'an is a command to manifest the name "Peace" within a person. The seeker of God must attain the state of a "sound heart" so that only greetings emanate from it. As the Qur'an says: (The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children) *(But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.)" (Shu'arā, 88-89)

Manifestations of peace in righteous servants

God's special servants—whom the Qur'an calls the servants of the Most Merciful—are manifestations of divine peace among people. (And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace,) (Furqan/63) This means: « Manifestations of peace in righteous servants.» When the ignorant address them, their response is "Peace." In this verse, peace is a sign of good manners, humility, and purity of heart. (Muslim, Sahih Muslim, Book of Faith, Chapter on Spreading Peace)

Al-Qushayri says in his *Lata'if al-Isharat*: "Their greeting of peace is a sign of the purity of their hearts, for ignorance is only answered by a tranquil and serene heart, which responds to ignorance with kindness." (Qushayri, vol. 2, p. 421.) That is, their response of peace is a sign of the purity of their hearts, for the heart The truly at peace does not respond to ignorance with kindness. Indeed, the righteous servants of God are the



embodiment of the name "Peace" in the realm of ethics and conduct; they are the very ones of whom the Holy Qur'an says: ("Peace be upon you for what you patiently.

The analysis of verses and narrations reveals that "peace" in the Holy Qur'an has three dimensions:

1. On the divine level, it is one of the Most Beautiful Names of God, the source of absolute mercy and security.
2. On the human level, it is a command to spread peace, affection, and love.
3. On the spiritual level, it is a state of annihilation and salvation in which the listener is freed from all fear and anxiety.

Consequently, the believing servant becomes an embodiment of the name "peace" when he spreads health and security within himself, his family, and his community. As the Holy Qur'an states: (But those who feared their Lord will be driven to Paradise in groups until, when they reach it while its gates have been opened and its keepers say, "Peace be upon you; you have become pure; so enter it to abide eternally therein," [they will enter]). (Zumar: 73). Peace, in the end, is a bridge between the servant and his Lord, from peace of the tongue to peace of the heart, and from peace of the heart to the abode of peace. It is peace, from it comes peace, and to it returns peace.

An Inner Reading of the Qur'anic Greeting

In the Holy Qur'an, the greeting is considered a sacred word that transcends mere verbal salutation, reaching a level of inner presence and reassurance. The Holy Qur'an presents the greeting in several verses as a sign of divine security and a manifestation of mercy. ([And] "Peace," a word from a Merciful Lord) (Ya-Sin: 58) - [Having been told], "Enter it in peace, safe" [and secure].) (Hijr: 46) - (For them will be the Home of Peace with their Lord. And He will be their protecting friend because of what they used to do.) (An'am: 127). From an esoteric perspective, this greeting is not merely a heavenly address, but a manifestation of God's presence in the human heart; a voice from within that liberates the listener from fear and sadness, and leads him to a state of divine certainty and security.

Peace in Theoretical Sufism: From Ibn Arabi to Imam Khomeini

Ibn Arabi considers Peace (*Al-Salam*) to be one of the most comprehensive names of God, a name signifying "pure existence" without deficiency or anxiety. He says, "All peace in the world is derived from the name of God, *Al-Salam*." (Ibn Arabi, p. 45) That is, all peace and tranquility in existence is a ray of manifestations of that name.

In his *Fusus al-Hikam*, he also affirms that the essence of peace is the



Imam Khomeini (may God have mercy on him), in his explanation of the dawn manifestation of unity, which encompasses multiplicity within itself. Similarly, prayer, considers peace to be a light that shines upon the heart of the seeker, liberating it from all that is other than God: "Peace is the manifestation of God's mercy in the sound heart, and it is the station of security from all fear and

anxiety." (Khomeini, p. 210) In theoretical Sufism, peace is the result of annihilation in the will of God, where the believer passes through the duality of "I" and "He" and settles in the ocean of unity. The Holy Qur'an also affirms this meaning: [To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul,) - (Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him],) Fajr: 27-28). This return is a return to security, a return from multiplicity to unity, from fear to security, and from the self to God.

Peace in ethical and educational Sufism:

From al-Qushayri to Jalal al-Din Rumi and Mutahhari, al-Qushayri says in the Epistle: "The true peace of God is upon His servant, and the radiance of security in his heart." That is, the peace of God is a light that shines in the servant, freeing him from anxiety and heedlessness. From this perspective, peace is not the end of the path, but rather the beginning of refining the heart. The seeker adheres to the etiquette of "Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of God," and connects servitude with love.

Jalal al-Din Rumi also considers peace to be the voice of the Beloved, speaking with passion and love: "That peace which descends from God upon the heart / Shakes away fear and sorrow." In his Sufism, peace means the presence of peace: (But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.") (Shu'arā: 89) Martyr Motahhari extends this meaning to the social level, writing: "Peace is the harmony of man with God, with himself, and with society; and the believer is the one from whom nothing but peace emanates. From this perspective, peace is the link between Sufism and ethics: reconciliation between the inner and outer worlds, and the individual's conduct with social responsibility."

In the Holy Qur'an, the greeting is central to peace and divine presence, and in Sufism, it is the secret to achieving unity and inner purity.

*Theoretically, the greeting is evidence of the unity of existence;

*Ethically, it is the etiquette of interaction and purity of heart;

*Educationally, it is the path to the well-being of society.

*Thus, the greeting is the link between *Shariah* (Islamic law), *Tariqah* (Sufi path), and *Haqiqah* (ultimate truth);

*Its beginning is a greeting, its middle is tranquility, and its end is the abode of peace.



Peace and Stages of Surrender in the Qur'an and Islamic Sufism

Peace in the Holy Qur'an is not merely a sign of tranquility and serenity, but an existential reality stemming from the essence of "submission." The words Islam, faith, and peace originate from a single source, and from a Sufi perspective, they represent three stages of a single path: Islam is outward submission, faith is inward submission, and Sufism is existential submission. These three stages depict the path of human spiritual development from outward submission to inner tranquility, culminating in a state of peace.

Islam; outward submission

Islam is the beginning of the path of servitude. The Holy Qur'an says, addressing Abraham, son of Abraham, peace be upon him: (When his Lord said to him, "Submit", he said "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.") (Baqarah: 131) At this stage, a person submits to God's command and surrenders their will to His. Martyr Mutahhari says: "Islam is harmony with the order of existence; the believer is one who is at peace with themselves and with their Lord." (Motahhari, vol. 1, 4) Thus, Islam is the gateway to all levels of conduct; without it, faith and mysticism cannot be achieved.

Faith; peace of heart and tranquility of soul

Faith is the second step on the path of surrender. At this stage, a person moves from outward acceptance to heartfelt faith. (They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice - those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided.) (An'am: 82) In this verse, pure faith is accompanied by "security" and guidance. This security is inner peace or tranquility. Al-Qushayri says in his Epistle: "Peace is the station of security from doubt," meaning that in it, the believer's heart is freed from anxiety and hesitation. (Qushayri, Abd al-Karim, Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah, Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1408 AH) Thus, faith is the stage in which submission moves from the outward to the inward.

Sufism: Achieving surrender in the world of existence

Sufism is the culmination and fruit of the path of Islam and faith. At this stage, submission becomes an existential experience, and the name "peace" manifests itself in the human soul.

Ibn Arabi says: "Whoever submits his affairs to God sees the entire universe as a manifestation of divine peace" (Ibn Arabi, vol. 2, p. 11). Imam Khomeini also says: "Submission is a prelude to peace. Whoever submits himself to God is safe from all fear and anxiety." (Khomeini, p. 341.) In this sense, Sufism is a stage in which the servant reaches a state of tranquility in light of the name "Peace" and is freed from all fear and anxiety. [Having been told], "Enter it in peace, safe [and secure].) (Hijr: 46)



Islam, faith, and Sufism are three dimensions of a path whose destination is peace: Islam is practical submission, faith is submission of the heart, and Sufism is submission in existence.

*Peace is the ultimate fruit of this path; it begins with submission, is established in faith, and is perfected in Sufism. From the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, a person on this path...

moves from "I have submitted" to "I have found peace," and finally to enter it.

In the Holy Qur'an, peace is not merely a sign of peace, but also the fruit of submission and faith.

Conclusion

Peace in the Holy Qur'an is a multi-dimensional concept, transcending mere social greetings to become, in Islamic mysticism, a level of divine presence and existential peace. In light of Qur'anic and mystical analysis, we see that "peace" is the essence of all levels of human behavior, from outward Islam to inner faith and existential mysticism. From the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, peace is a divine gift and a symbol of security and mercy. ([And] "Peace," a word from a Merciful Lord) (Ya-Sin: 58). This peace is not merely the word of God, but also a manifestation of mercy and tranquility in the heart of the believer. Sufism extends.

The Islamic perspective on this truth leads to the inner experience of humanity, considering it the ultimate goal of spiritual conduct. In the light of the name Peace, the seeker is liberated from fear and sorrow, living in absolute peace with the Truth. In this sense, the greeting is the link between the *Shariah* (Islamic law), the *Tariqah* (Path), and *Haqiqah* (Truth). In the Sharia, it appears as a ritual of peace and greeting among believers. On the Tariqa, it is the tranquility of the heart and the certainty of faith; and in Haqiqa, it is annihilation in the Divine Will and attainment of the Abode of Peace. Thus, the believer's path begins with "the submission of the trustworthy," and in faith, it reaches « the trustworthy one,» and in Sufism, it attains its perfection with « enter him in peace, trustworthy.

Therefore, the path of the believer is to move from « peace of the tongue» to «peace of the heart» and settle in « peace of existence»: He is peace, from Him is peace, to Him is peace, and He calls to the abode of peace.

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Challenges of Reconciling Divine Decree and Predestination with Free Will in Human Destiny: A Critique of the Article "Reconciling the Divine Decree and Free Will in Islam"

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Abstract

The present article critiques and evaluates the article "Reconciling the Divine Decree and Free Will in Islam" by Justin Parrott (2017). This article, published on Yaqeen, American Institute of Islamic Research, examines the role of human voluntary action in determining one's destiny. The aforementioned article is based on Sunni theology, utilizing their exegetical and theological sources. This critique focuses on three axes: "theoretical framework," "theological foundations," and "the Qur'an." The findings of this critique indicate that the article is problem-oriented in terms of subject matter and its content is free from biases. Only in limited cases concerning the definition of divine decree and predestination (*qada'* and *qadar*), the existence of evil in the universe, and the degree of certainty of the divine decree in human destiny, does it differ from the principles of Shi'a theology. This shows that recent interpretations in both Muslim groups have moved away from past rigidities and, by accepting logical and intermediary paths, have drawn closer to one another.

Keywords: Determinism and Free Will, Divine Decree and Predestination (*Qada'* and *Qadar*), Theology (*Kalām*).

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Introduction

The issue of determinism (*jabr*) and free will (*ikhtiyār*) has always been one of important issues in Islamic theology. For a long time, this question has been raised: how are the actions performed by a human being under their control, and how can they be predetermined and under the will of God, the Creator of the universe, and based on this, how is human destiny determined? The ramifications of this topic grew to the extent that it created sects among Muslims with differing opinions about it. The present article, "Reconciling the Divine Decree and Free Will in Islam," is one of the recent studies that, in addition to academic attention to the subject, has a problem-oriented and practical approach to human life. The aforementioned article was first published in 2017 on the Yaqeen Institute website and was edited again in August 2025 by an "unknown author" and republished on the same site. The Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research is an American independent research institute and think tank established in 2016, primarily interested in advanced study in the field of Islam and Muslim communities. The Institute's goal is to Yaqeen is guiding Muslims towards discovering meaning and confidence in their faith. Justin Parrott is a scholar and researcher at Yaqeen Institute who contributes to various educational initiatives, helping Muslims strengthen their connection with the sacred text through scholarly yet understandable explanations.

The introduction of the article under discussion states that the idea of divine providence, also known as the divine decree and predestination (*qada'* and *qadar*), has troubled theologians and philosophers for centuries. How can we reconcile two apparently contradictory facts that Allah has absolute power and sovereignty over all creation, and yet we are responsible for our actions? Are we forced to do what we do, or are our choices meaningful? This question led to one of the first sectarian splits in the Muslim community, between the the Qadarites, who believed in absolute human free will (God has no control over us), and the Jabarites, who believed in absolute determinism and fatalism (we have no control over our actions). Each of these groups developed an extreme and misleading theology. If God has no control over our lives, then why should we pray to God? Conversely, if we have no control over our actions and destiny, why should we do good deeds at all?

This question was not only a hot topic in early Islamic history but has been an important issue throughout history for both religious and secular reasons. Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, wrote seriously about this issue over two thousand years ago due to its implications for understanding order in the world, the origin of life, human freedom, and happiness. Today, this subject is a topic of complex academic debates, under the title of



determinism, in scientific disciplines such as mathematics, physics, biology, psychology, and social sciencesⁱ. It is clear that our understanding of destiny plays a decisive role in our view of the world and, perhaps more importantly, our behavior within it. Muslims have also had doubts in their faith due to the multitude of philosophical puzzles arising from it. How does Islam solve this puzzle? The answer is that the Qur'an and Sunnah tread a middle path between the two historical extremes, affirming both God's sovereignty and human responsibility. Looking at these two aspects purely rationally, they seem to be mutually exclusive, and it appears that both cannot be true simultaneously. However, we must remember that God exists outside of time and space, beyond the cosmic veil, in the Unseen (*ghayb*). In contrast, we humans can only conceive of realities within the framework of time and space. Divine providence or destiny is a reality that exists beyond time and space, meaning we are simply incapable of conceiving it with our limited rational faculties. For this reason, God expressed the reality of providence using linguistic tools (especially literary images) which in Qur'anic science is "expressing a subjective meaning using sensory and visual images," images that are neither imaginary nor merely metaphorical. On the contrary, they form profound truths in the universe. These images include the Pen (*Qalam*), the Preserved Tablet (*Lawh Mahfūz*), and the angelic records of deeds. They express the nature of providence, that God has complete control over everything. And while everything has been decreed from eternity, God has the power to change destiny based on our choices. In fact, we are morally responsible for our actions, and our free will, combined with a measure of control stemming from God's sovereignty, determines our ultimate destiny.

The Nature of Divine Providence in Parrott's View

Divine providence in Islam is referred to by the term *qada'* and *qadar*, which in the precise meaning of the words means "decree and measure." This term is a combination of two words that refer to the dual aspects of divine providence. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes: "The scholars said the divine decree (*al-qada'*) consists of the entire and complete judgment forever, and the divine measurement (*al-qadar*) consists of the particulars of the judgment and its details."ⁱⁱⁱ

Although scholars sometimes define these terms differently, the definition provided here is based on two sets of texts in the Qur'an and Sunnah: texts that speak of the decree as absolute and unchangeable, and texts that speak of changes and modifications related to the decree as it is brought into being. These two sets of texts appear contradictory on the surface, but they are two aspects of one reality, and their apparent contradiction is merely the result of the limited frame of reference of the



human mind. Both sets of texts are reconciled towards the single goal of guiding us to correct behavior in relation to God and our fellow humans.

The idea of the absolute and unchangeable decree is embodied in the literary image of the "Preserved Tablet" (*al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz*), which contains everything that will come to pass, including the revealed scriptures.

Allah said: *This is truly a glorious Qur'an [written] on a Preserved Tablet*ⁱⁱⁱ

This term conveys the absolute reality of divine providence through a mental representation of something we are already familiar with, although the Preserved Tablet is different from any tablet we know. The concept of the Preserved Tablet is that God knows all things before they come into being, as He said:

"Are you [Prophet] not aware that God knows all that is in the heavens and earth? All this is written in a Record; this is easy for God (22:70)."

Other verses indicate that not only does God know everything, but also that He grants full permission for everything to occur:

"It is He who has control over the heavens and earth and has no offspring—no one shares control with Him—and Who created all things and made them to an exact measure (25:2)."

In the continuation of the article, the author mentions some hadiths from the Prophet (pbuh), such as one narrated by Ibn Abbas:

"Be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him before you. If you ask, ask from Allah. If you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that if the nations gather together to benefit you, they will not benefit you unless Allah has decreed it for you. And if the nations gather together to harm you, they will not harm you unless Allah has decreed it for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried."^{iv}

The author explains that the Prophet (pbuh) informed us, that the decree has already been made. However, the Prophet (pbuh) also prescribed action: being mindful of God and seeking help from God.

The important point here is that everything happens by God's will, although God is not pleased with everything He permits to happen. There are two ways to understand the "will of God": the universal will and the legislative will of God. The universal will encompass everything that is permitted to happen, whether good or evil. Meanwhile, the legislative will encompass the good deeds that God commands us to do.

Ibn Abi al-Izz, the commentator on the early and agreed-upon Aqidah al-Tahawiyah, writes: *"The researchers among Ahl al-Sunnah say that 'will' in the book of Allah is two types: a will that is preordained, universal, and*



creative, and a will that is religious, commanding, and legislating. Thus, the legislative will include what Allah loves and is pleased with, and the universal will is what is willed, including all things that occur."^v

The confusion that led to sectarianism in early Islamic history arose from not understanding this point by the Qadarites and Jabarites. Parrott, citing another part of *Sharh al-Aqidah al-Ṭahāwī*, summarizes the beliefs of the Jabarites and Qadarites as follows: the Jabarites said God issued the command for good and evil, so He is pleased with both; whereas the Qadarites said that the command for evils is not from God and these are created by another power. The Jabarites have denied humans of moral responsibility, and the Qadarites have denied God of absolute power.

Continuing, to explain the creative (*takwini*) and legislative (*tashri'i*) will, the article's author refers to a hadith from Ibn Abbas in the interpretation of verse 39 of Surah Ra'd:

"There are two books: a book in which is erased whatever Allah wills, and with Him is the mother of the Book."^{vi}

In fact, every day, angels record everything and destinies are determined or changed. The factor for changing destiny is our deeds, including supplications (*du'a*), humble pleas, good deeds, and intentions. The power of our deeds does not create change by itself; rather, it is a reward that God grants us for submitting to His will. In this way, humans are held responsible for their actions.

Human Will, Action, and Responsibility in Parrott's View

The Qur'an and Sunnah are clear in expressing human moral responsibility. God said:

"Each soul is responsible for its own actions; no soul will bear the burden of another. You will all return to your Lord in the end, and He will tell you the truth about your differences."(6:164)

This is the whole purpose of life, the great test that culminates on the Day of Judgment, which would have no meaning unless judgment is just and meaningful. Therefore, God has delegated will to humans to be used in the service of good. Our will is "free will" in the sense that we are not compelled to do what we do. We will be rewarded or punished in the hereafter based on what we have done with the will God has given us.

Parrott then, by quoting numerous sayings from the Prophet (pbuh), explains the direct impact of human behavior and actions, along with supplication and seeking means (*tawassul*), on his destiny. To correct a common mistake among people, he says that someone who thinks that reliance on God (*tawakkul*) requires no action is like a person who sits in their car and does not fasten their seatbelt, thinking that it has no effect on what God has destined for them. This notion is wrong. In reality, in a world



full of cause and effect, we pursue the causes of a good destiny, while acknowledging that we do not rely solely on the causes themselves. This is the true meaning of reliance on God (*tawakkul*). The Prophet said, "There is no contagion," meaning all diseases occur by God's will, yet he also said, "Do not mix those who are the sick with those who are healthy," thus acknowledging the role of worldly causes in treating illness^{vii}. Therefore, any action we intend to do in the future should be qualified as an action that will only occur under God's will because we know that it will not be realized by our will and ability alone, as He said:

Do not say of anything, 'I will do that tomorrow,' without adding, 'God willing'. (18:23-24)

Ibn Taymiyyah writes:

The servant has two states of being in relation to what is decreed: a state before the decree and a state after the decree. It is a duty upon him before the decree to seek refuge in Allah, to depend upon Him, and to call upon Him. If the result of the decree is not from his actions, then he must be patient over it and satisfied with it. If it was the result of his actions and it is a blessing, he praises Allah for that. If it was the result of sin, then he seeks forgiveness from Him for that.^{viii}

Before the occurrence of the decree (*qada'*), we must seek refuge in God, supplicate and humble ourselves, rely on Him, and do the necessary work to achieve a good outcome. After the decree is realized, we must accept it and continue on our path. If it was a calamity unrelated to our actions, like a natural disaster, we accept it as part of life's trials and remain steadfast in our faith. If the decree was a blessing, we praise God and remain grateful. If the decree was the result of our good deeds, we praise God for granting us success in performing them. If the decree was the result of our sins, we ask God for forgiveness and do whatever is necessary to make amends. At every moment in time, believers respond to the decree by acting.

The Secret of the Divine Command in Parrott's View

Why does the divine command seem to conflict with human free will? This apparent contradiction is based on our inability to conceive of a reality beyond time and linear sequence, let alone the essence of the acts and commands of God Almighty from beyond the confines of time and space. Since the human mind cannot escape the categories of past, present, and future, we find it counterintuitive that our future actions were determined in the past. But for God, there is no past, present, or future, because He is the only one who regulates time. Consequently, scholars consider providence a divine mystery, and philosophical inquiry into it leads to misguidance, just as the Holy Prophet prohibited this. Imam Ahmad ibn



Hanbal recommended accepting providence, both good and bad, and not asking why and how it is^{ix}. This is a rule called *bi lā takyif* (without asking how). The rule of *al-tawqīf* (stopping at the text) also says, with a similar meaning, that one must stop (and not inquire further) when faced with the sacred text.

1. Critique of Justin Parrott's Article

The author's perspective in this article is unbiased and applicable to human lifestyle. The author's point that in the extremist view of the Jabarites, moral responsibility is denied from humans, is an accurate one, just as tyrants and oppressors in the past used this school to justify their actions, and extremists in the present day similarly justify their inhumane violence. It has been said, "*The best school for tyrannical and unjust governance is the school of determinism (jabr)*."^x On the other hand, the author describes the corrected view, using the two definitions of God's creative and legislative will, as a hopeful and industrious perspective, stating that human destiny is not outside their will. He recommends supplication (*du'a*) and seeking means (*tawassul*), and speaks of their definite effects in receiving help from Almighty God. He also recommends satisfaction and patience in the face of that part of divine providence that is outside human will and not the result of his actions. The author also considered parts of the sayings quoted from the Prophet (pbuh) and religious leaders that prohibit deep speculation about divine providence and warn against going astray thereby. It is worth mentioning that all the sources cited in the article are from Sunni commentators and theologians.

1.1. Divine Providence

First, in discussing divine providence and *qada'* and *qadar*, the sentence quoted from Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, "*The scholars said the divine decree includes the complete and eternal judgment, and the divine measurement (al-qadar) includes the details and components of that judgment*" can be elaborated upon. Although clearer definitions of the meanings of *qada'* and *qadar* appear later in the article, it is useful to point to these meaning by Allamah Hilli. In defining the terms *qada'* and *qadar*, he first extracts their meanings from the Qur'an. One of the meanings of *qada'*, according to the verse

Then He completed them as seven heavens within two days. (41:12)

is completion which is mentioned in the context of the creation of the heavens. The second meaning of *qada'*, using the verse

And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him. (17:23)

is command and obligation as in the verse where the command to refrain from worshipping other than God is issued. And the third meaning of *qada'*



is declaration and announcement. God announces something, and this announcement is referred to as *qaḍa'* in the Qur'an:

And We decreed (qadayna) to the Children of Israel in the Book. (17:4)

Meaning We informed the Children of Israel (Helli, 1372 AH, 2:88). According to Allamah, when *qaḍa'* and *qadar* are mentioned regarding existential matters such as the descent of rain or the growth of plants, each of these meanings can be applied. But regarding human actions, only the meaning of declaration and announcement is correct for *qaḍa'* and *qadar*, and the meanings of completion and command do not apply, as they would imply determinism. God Almighty has written all human actions in the Preserved Tablet (*Lawḥ Maḥfūz*) and informed the angels about what action each human will perform in the future. In another version of *Kashf al-Murad*, it is mentioned that Avicenna (Abu Ali Sina) stated in the technical meaning of *qaḍa'* and *qadar* that *qaḍa'* refers to God's universal knowledge, and *qadar* refers to His knowledge of changing particulars, and many rational scholars followed him. (Helli, 1372 AH, 2:446) Therefore, for human actions, only this meaning is correct because there is a consensus on the obligation to be pleased with divine *qaḍa'* and *qadar*, and being pleased with disbelief (*kufṛ*) and other reprehensible human actions is not permissible. (Helli, 1372 AH, 2:88) Thus, it can be seen that according to this view, *qaḍa'* and *qadar* pertain to God's knowledge, not His will, and God's knowledge is not the cause of human actions. God decrees in existential (non-voluntary) matters, meaning He issues a command, but regarding voluntary human action, if *qaḍa'* and *qadar* exist, what is meant by it, is God's knowledge. God knows both the totality of our action and its details. God knows that I will do a certain thing, and He also knows that I will do this thing at this specific time and place. Thus, the difference between this expression and the sentence quoted from Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani becomes clear.

1.2. Creative and Legislative Will

In explaining God's creative and legislative will, the article's author uses the book *Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwīyah*. Abu Ja'far al-Tahawī (d. 321 AH) was one of the three figures who initiated a reformist movement in Sunni creed in the 4th century AH. He was born in a village called Taha in Upper Egypt. Tahawī was mostly interested in hadith and fiqh and was considered one of the greatest narrators of Hadiths and jurists of his time. It is said that he was initially a follower of the Hanafī school, and it is better to say that the school of Abu Hanifah satisfied his critical view more than the Shafī'i school (Fakhouri, 1392 AH, 1:347). In theology (*kalām*), Tahawī authored a small treatise called *Bayan al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*, which became known as *Aqidah al-Tahawīyah*. In its introduction, he states that this



treatise will express the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah according to the views of Abu Hanifah, Abu Yusuf, and Mohammad al-Shaybani (Golpaiegani, 1385. Some commentaries on Aqidah al-Tahawiyah have been written up to the present century and are available to researchers.

In Aqidah al-Tahawiyah, it is stated that the cause of the misguidance of the Qadarites (*Mu'tazila*) and Jabarites is that they consider God's will to be one kind, whereas the divine will is of two types: legislative and universal will. The universal will is synonymous with God's will or providence for everything in the universe, while God is not pleased with the disbelief of His servants. God does not will something legislatively unless there is good in it for humanity. So, the universal will is not necessarily beloved to God, whereas the legislative will is definitely beloved to God. Another difference between the legislative and universal will is that the legislative will may or may not be realized. For example, God wills (legislatively) that a disbeliever believe, but he does not believe, and thus the legislative will, is not realized. Whereas in the believer's coming to faith, both the universal and legislative wills come together, and the individual believes. The Jabarites say that God's will, is only universal. God has willed everything that exists, and all of it is pleasing to Him, both good deeds and sins. They did not differentiate between the legislative will and the universal will. The *Mu'tazila* also consider God's will to be one kind, and only the legislative will, which God loves. Since sins are not pleasing to God, they are not His act or His creation (Nooristani, 298-300), but rather the act and creation of humans.

In explaining the division of God's universal and legislative will, it is mentioned in Tasnim commentary under verse 35 of Surah al-Nahl that believers, under the training of divine prophets (as), say, "Indeed, for God, glory be to Him, there are two wills": God has one creative will and one legislative will. God's creative will pertains to His own act: God creates the heavens, creates the earth, gives life and death, constricts and expands, provides sustenance, all management of the universe is in God's hands, and whatever He wills, is accomplished. God said:

His command is only when He intends a thing that He says to it, 'Be,' and it is. (36:82)

The legislative will, is where between the will of God and the external realization of the act, the human will intervenes, and God asks the human to obey, believe, do righteous deeds, etc., by their own choice and will. Because God wants the human to do something with their own choice and will, sometimes the human chooses, sometimes the human does not choose, and the Holy Essence of God has left the human free in terms of creation, meaning God created the human in such a way that they have free choice,



have thought, have motivation, agreement, and opposition. Because human perfection lies in this way; if the human were compelled to follow a one-way path and be obedient, this would not be perfection. Perfection is in the path being two-way: they think, evaluate, study, and fight against the desires of the self (*nafs*), the tempting (*mosawwala*) self, the commanding self (*nafs al-ammara*), instincts, lusts, anger, defeat them, and make victorious for the intellect in order to achieve perfection. So, if these were not present, the issues of struggling against the self (*jihad al-nafs*), self-purification, and spiritual growth would not arise. Therefore human freedom is among the greatest divine blessings.

As we see, things that God wills creatively are inevitable, because the entire universe is His army and forces, God said

To Allah belong the soldiers of the heavens and the earth. (48:4)

If the power of God is infinite and whatever is in the world are His agents, then non-occurrence is inconceivable. There is nothing outside the system of creation that could prevent God's will, and within the structure of creation, all are God's agents, as said

And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him. (74:31)

So, it is inconceivable that the Holy Essence of God wants something to happen and it does not occur. But in legislative matters, to preserve human perfection, He placed human will and choice in the middle. He said,

Say, 'The truth is from your Lord. So, whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve'. (18:29)

Or

Indeed, We guided him to the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful. (76:3)

Humans stand at a crossroads. The Holy Essence of God, in Surah Ma'idah, when mentioning religious rulings says that He willed to purify you. This is a type of legislative will, meaning He willed to purify you through your deeds and your acts of worship (Javadi Amoli, 1385).

1.3. Good and Evil in the Universe

As can be seen, the explanation of the creational and legislative will quoted from Tasnim's commentary and what was quoted from Tahawi in the article under discussion, despite a very long-time gap, have a lot of semantic similarities, except in the case where Tahawi's text states that the will of the universe is not necessarily beloved by God, whereas the legislative will definitely is. The root of this statement becomes clear in the definition of good and evil. What is not beloved to God in the creative will is the evils in the universe, which, based on principle of intellectual goodness and badness, would not be pleasing to the Wise God.



One of the comprehensive definitions in the discussion of evil is that of Avicenna, which he addressed in his important works like *Al-Shifa*, *Al-Najāt*, and *Al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbihāt*. He initially defines well as something desirable, sought after, and wished for by humans. He says that good, in brief, is something that everything is attached to, and what everything yearns for, is existence or the perfection of existence. And evil is something that has no essence; it is either the non-existence of a substance or lacks qualification for being a substance (Avicenna, 1376 AH: 380). So, in reality, it is existence that is yearned for, and no existent has a desire for non-existence. Avicenna enumerates the instances of evil and says that evil is of several types. For example, deficiencies such as ignorance, weakness, and physical defects are called evil. Or pain and grief, which result from perceiving a loss or non-existence (Avicenna, 1376 AH: 380). In *Al-Najāt*, he also mentions other types of evil: first, moral evils and ugly, reprehensible behavior, such as murder and adultery; second, the sources of moral evils such as lust, anger, miserliness, and deceit; third, perceptive evils like pain, suffering, and grief; and fourth, non-existential matters like poverty and death (Avicenna, 1364 AH :669). According to Avicenna, evils can be viewed in two categories: the first category are those that are themselves non-existential matters, like ignorance, inability, and deficiency in creation; the second category are those that are existential matters, but whenever they become the source of non-existential matters, they are considered evil, such as floods, earthquakes, venomous and predatory animals, etc. The first category is evil by essence and the second is evil by accident (*sharr bi al-'arad*). Evil by accident is an existent that, due to its existence, is good, but in connection with some matters, evil appears from it, although its good outweighs its evil. Even though evils are numerous in the world, when compared to all the goods in the world, they are small. For this reason, Avicenna and other philosophers consider evil to be "much" but not "most" (Avicenna, 1376 AH: 459).

With the explanation of good and evil, it can be seen that, contrary to Tahawi's statement, in the world of creation, which is the world of existence and is formed by God's universal will, evil by essence has no existence, and all of existence is good. If evil is observed in a phenomenon, it is due to its weakness in existence, such that in the most perfect existence, no evil enters. In the hierarchy of creatures, any existent that possesses higher levels of perfection has, to that extent, less evil—in fact, less deficiency. But in the lower levels of creatures, proportionally to the deficiency and non-existence inherent in them, evil also finds its way in (Orovti Mowafaq, 1401 AH:16). For example, evil caused by natural disasters is due to flaws in planning or safety systems, or destruction of nature caused by humans.



Evil caused by predatory animals is due to damage to their environment or lack of knowledge of their behavior. Therefore, the world that came into being through God's universal will is entirely good and beloved by God.

1.4. The Unchangeable Book and the Changeable Book

In Justin Parrott's article, mention is made of the changeable and unchangeable book with God, and that the cause of change in the book is our actions and intentions. There are many traditions regarding supplication, charity, and benevolence for achieving a good end, improving one's life situation, and changing human destiny. The blessed verse also confirms this truth:

"But Allah would not punish them while you, [O Mohammad], are among them, and Allah would not punish them while they seek forgiveness" (6:33)

God has called people to supplicate and said:

"And your Lord says, 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you.' (40:60)

And elsewhere He said that if people did not supplicate, God would not pay attention to them:

Say, 'What would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication?' (25:77)

Supplicating can be compared to skills that humans are currently developing and teaching, such as "anger management techniques," which can change destiny or measures (*qadar*). And of course, supplication, by connecting to the eternal divine power and wisdom, will be much more intelligent and powerful.

In Al-Mizan commentary, this topic is mentioned under the titles of "definite" and "non-definite" divine decree. There is a fundamental distinction between "*qada*" (decree) and "*qadar*" (measure/destiny), and also between "definite decree" and "non-definite decree", which directly impacts the possibility of change or lack thereof. *Qadar* means measuring and determining the limits and characteristics of things (such as length, width, shape, duration, etc.). And *qada*' is the divine judgment issued after *Qadar* and upon God's ratification. If *qada*' arises from a complete chain of causes, it is a definite or unchangeable decree. That is, when all components of the cause (agent, matter, conditions, and preparatory factors) are present and no obstacle exists, the existence of the effect becomes necessary and definite. Such a decree is unchangeable. And as previously stated, the definitiveness of the decree does not contradict the voluntary nature of human actions. Human happiness and misery are acquired and are the effects of their own deeds and beliefs.

Whenever the chain of causes is incomplete, the decree is non-definite or changeable. In this state, some causes and conditions exist, but the



realization of the effect may not be certain due to an interfering obstacle or a change in conditions. This type of decree is subject to change and alteration (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 14:500).

What is kept in *Umm al-Kitab* (the Mother of the Book) or the Preserved Tablet pertains to the definite and unchangeable decree, which is the origin and source of all other decrees (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 11:506). Among such unchangeable decrees, we see that He said,

That has been inscribed in the Book. (17:58)

Its meaning is that the destruction of oppressive nations and their punishment is a definite destiny written in the Preserved Tablet (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 13:183). Also, the creation that God will have in the other world, called the second creation, is a definite divine decree (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 19:79). As he said

And that [incumbent] upon Him is the other creation. (53:47)

God has also considered mercy as a definite decree:

Your Lord has written (kataba) mercy upon Himself. (6:54)

In this verse "Writing" means proof and definitive judgment. Since mercy, which is the effusion of grace upon the deserving and conveying everything to the happiness it is worthy and capable of attaining, is among God's attributes of action, He attributes to Himself through "writing" or a definite decree (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 7:35). Alongside all this, it must be said that although according to God's definite decree, when He makes a thing obligatory, it becomes definite, yet it is not such that He has stripped Himself of the power to abandon it. So, His power over everything, whether it is His decree or not, is absolute. Every definite punishment and any other definite matter, if God wills, He creates it, otherwise, no. (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 7:122)

In contrast to the definite decree, there is the non-definite or changeable decree. The verse *Allah eliminates what He wills and confirms, and with Him is the Mother of the Book. (13:39)* mentions these two types of decree and, similar to what has been said so far, considers the definite decree to be in *Umm al-Kitab*. In the definite decree, the complete causes are present and lead to the occurrence of the measured thing, whereas in the non-definite decree, the complete causes are not present.

Verses and traditions indicate that, in summary, humanity is divided into two types and two categories (misguided and guided) based on divine decree. However, the elaboration of this summary—who belongs to which category—is related to their own voluntary actions and depends on their deeds. In other words, the decree that passed upon them at the beginning of creation and the start of their existence was a conditional decree (non-definitive or changeable). But in the stage of permanence, that conditional



decree becomes absolute and definitive when voluntary actions come into play, because it is voluntary actions that cause happiness or misery and entail guidance or misguidance (Tabatabai, 1378 AH 8:122). Conditional decree and measure (*qaḍa'* and *qadar*) pertain to the dimensions of an individual's entry into life—such as family, society, time and era, gender, race, abilities, etc.—and the details of destinies are revealed annually according to the blessed Surah al-Qadr. These are not yet the complete causes for a person's final destiny. Their deeds, including good and bad, supplication, effort, etc., can determine the definitive decree and destiny.

1.5. The Permissibility of Discussing Divine Providence

In one part of the article under discussion, this statement from Ibn Taymiyyah was mentioned: *"The servant has two states of being in relation to what is decreed: a state before the decree and a state after the decree. It is a duty upon him before the decree to seek refuge in Allah, to depend upon Him, and to call upon Him. If the result of the decree is not from his actions, then he must be patient over it and satisfied with it. If it was the result of his actions and it is a blessing, he praises Allah for that. If it was the result of sin, then he seeks forgiveness from Him for that."*¹ Regarding this statement, it must be said that what is meant by "before the decree" could mean one's entire life, the nights of *Qadr* each year, or before making a decision—for example, choosing a city to live in. It seems that knowing when a result will occur is not easy, and that the decrees of this world are subject to God's worldly laws, including mercy, forgiveness, vengeance, gradual seizure (*istidrāj*), respite (*imhāl*), etc. Furthermore, knowing whether a result or decree from God is a reward for a good deed or a punishment for our sins is also not easy, as He said:

But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. (2:216)

Therefore, in any case, the believer is grateful and hopeful. The Prophet (PBUH) also said: *Wondrous is the affair of the believer; for all of his affairs are good. No decree (qaḍa') is decreed by God for him except that it is good for him—if he is afflicted with hardship, he is patient, and that is good for him; if he is given ease, he is grateful, and that is good for him.* (Majlisi, 71:139)

Furthermore, the article's author, using a hadith narrated in Sunan al-Tirmidhi from Abu Huraira who said: "With this I have commanded you? With this I was sent to you? Verily, the people before you were destroyed when they argued over this matter. I am determined for you not to argue

¹ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 8:76.

over it.¹" This warns that delving deeply into divine providence might lead to misguidance. Although the narrator of this hadith is not considered completely reliable, a similar saying has been transmitted from Imam Ali (as) who, in response to three consecutive questions about the issue of divine destiny, said:

It is a dark path, so do not tread it; [then he was asked a second time, and he said:] it is a deep ocean, so do not enter it; [then he was asked a third time, and he said:] it is the secret of God, so do not burden yourselves with it. (Razi, 1414:527)

It is obvious that philosophers and religious thinkers, especially specialists in theology, have throughout history engaged in lengthy and detailed discussions on the subject of *qada'* and *qadar*, citing the sayings of the Prophet (pubh) and other traditions, and have largely clarified the aspects of this issue. However, the advice of Imam Ali (as) against engaging the mind with the issue of divine *qada'* and *qadar* is directed at those who do not specialize in this matter. In other words, the Imam advised these people to know just this much: that one should not believe in determinism, but it is not necessary to become aware of all the intricacies of the subject of *qadar*. In this same vein, Imam Ali (as), in response to another person (who perhaps had greater intellectual capacity), clarified some aspects of divine *qadar* (Razi, 1414:481), and both the questioner and others were satisfied with that answer.

2. Conclusion

The article under discussion, despite being a practical academic article and, as the officials of the institute that published it state, aiming to create an understanding of Islam for people that inspires faith in their hearts, faces certain shortcomings. The critique of the article sought to examine these shortcomings by comparing them with more sources on the issue of determinism and free will. The first point observed in this comparison is the emphasis that *qada'* and *qadar* mean God's knowledge of what humans do voluntarily. The second point is that the entire universe of existence is the source of good, and evils arise from non-existence (*'adam*). The third point is that the outcome of affairs and human destiny is shaped by their own hands, and throughout their lives, through performing deeds, supplicating (*du'a*), and asking God, they make it possible for themselves to perform good deeds. Of course, human destiny is entirely in the hands of the All-Knowing, All-Wise God, and a believing person, knowing this, is a

¹ al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, v.4 p.11 #2133; declared fair due to external evidence (hasan li khayri) by al-Albānī in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* (Bayrūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1985), 1:36 #99.



hardworking, calm, and contented individual who, using the skill of supplication, is always hopeful. The remaining point is that the diversity of humans and destinies can create a feeling of failure in people of weak faith. Therefore, it has been recommended that such individuals not engage themselves in discussions of destiny. However, as seen throughout this article, scholars are constantly discussing, researching, and uncovering hidden points in the topics of this field, and there is no prohibition for them. In conclusion, it can be said that the detailed critique and examination of works such as this play a vital role in further elucidating theological issues in Islam and highlighting their role in the individual and social lifestyle of Muslims, leading to the attainment of a pure life (*hayāt tayyibah*).

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ⁱ Atmanspacher, Harald, and Robert Bishop. *Between Chance and Choice: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on*

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ⁱⁱ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī. *Fath al-Bārī bi-Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1959), 11:477.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sūrat al-Burūj 85:21-22; Abdel Haleem, M. A. *The Qurʿan: English translation and parallel Arabic text*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 591

^{iv} al-Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 4:248 #2516; declared authentic (ṣaḥīḥ) by al-Tirmidhī in his comments.

^v al-Ṭaḥāwī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, and ʿAlī ibn ʿAlī Ibn Abī al-ʿIzz. *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwīyah*. (Bayrūt: Muʿassasat al-Risālah, 1997), 1:79.

^{vi} al-Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar. *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl al-Qurʿān*. (Bayrūt: Muʿassasat al-Risālah, 2000), 16:480 #13:39

^{vii} Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4:1743 #2221

^{viii} Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā*, 8:76.

^{ix} al-Lālakāʾī, Hibat Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan. *Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿah*. (al-Saʿūdīyah: Dār al-Ṭibah, 2003), 1:175 #317

^x <https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/2016261/>- آیت-الله-جوادی-آملی-بهترین-مکتب-برای-حکمر و ای-جائزانه-مکتب-جبر

