

Occultation (Ghaybah)

Reza Rezaie Khanghah¹

¹ Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

A few days before the death of the fourth ambassador, Ali bin Mohammad al-Samri, Imam Mahdi sent a message to his ambassador saying: "In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Merciful, O Ali bin Mohammad al-Samari, the greatest of God; And between six days, gather your command and do not recommend anyone to take your place after your death, for complete occultation has occurred, and there is no reappearance (advent) except after the permission of Allah, the Exalted, stating him, and that is after a long period, hardness of hearts, and the earth being filled with oppression" ^[1]. In the middle of the 3rd and 4th centuries of Hejira, the Shiites were deprived of seeing their Imam and the absence procedure occurred for their Imam. Because of this, the expectation (Entezar) was being raised that Imam Mahdi will arrive ^[2]. Some moral traits are patience, hope, submission, chastity and helping generously, which are emphasized during the waiting period due to special circumstances ^[3]. The ghaybah (occultation) of Imam Mahdi practically divided the history of the Shi'ah into two periods, the period of the presence of the Imams and the period of occultation ^[4]. One of the characteristics of the presence of the Imam's period is to guide people to the truth and avoid distractions and detours ^[5]. The Occultation of Imam al-Mahdi is due to our sins ^[6]. The subject of Occultation was predicted years before its occurrence, and there are reliable hadiths in this regard ^[7] the research states that Occultation has three aspects: the question-what, the question-how and the question-why. Of the three, clearly the why question of Occultation has more links with the appearance of the Imam ^[8]. Some false claimants have stated the duration of the Occultation of Imam Mahdi for the minor or major Occultation is stated to be six days, or six months, or six years, which is not compatible with the duration of the Occultation either for the minor or major Occultation ^[9]. Belief in the Occultation of the Imam Mahdi played an important role in symbolism ^[10].

One of the issues of Mahdism is viewing the Imam, who is in his absence. One issue raised is the meeting with the Imam from the beginning, like his birthplace. This issue of the meeting is not rejected in his Occultation by the attitude of scholars of Shiism ^[11]. At the time of the short Occultation it was not possible for the Shiites to have access to the infallible Imam ^[12]. The absence of Imam Mahdi is not essentially synonymous with the absence of anything, but rather a hidden form of presence ^[13]. At the time of the Occultation of Divine caliphate, who is/are responsible for preparing the ground to show the path and introduce Imam Mahdi to the Ummah? For this aim, What strategies have been devised for the Shiites? ^[14].

Some jurisconsults claim that supervision of the properties of the Imam Mahdi is for the spiritual magistrate. They believe that decision-making, which is the responsibility of Imam Mahdi, is the responsibility of the jurisconsult while that Imam is absent ^[15].

Regarding the occultation of Imam Mahdi, it has been noted that the Shiites did not specify in their reports a timetable for the appearance of the Imam ^[16]. In the great occultation of Imam Mahdi, it is still permissible to call him Muhammad unless there is a greater danger of doing so ^[17].

This definition is adapted from a manuscript entitled "Who Is Imam Mahdi, Prophesied In Other Religions, And From Holy Fatima lineage?"^[18] and "Imam Mahdi, Antichrist Or A Promised Saviour Besides Jesus Christ?"^[19].

References

- ^{1.} [^]Hamade et al. (2021). *The Philosophy of the Great Occultation of Imam Mahdi and Anticipation Issue (Entezar Faraj)*. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE (IMJPL)*.
- ^{2.} [^]Safari Froushani et al. (2013). *The Reasons For Absence Of The Imam During The Progress Of Shiites Government*. *Mashreq-e Mouood*.
- ^{3.} [^]Ayati, N. (2014). *Terms Of Occultation (absence Period Of Imam Mahdi) And Its Moral Obligations*. *Mashreq-e Mouood*.
- ^{4.} [^]Joodaki, M. (2005). *The Consequences Of Ghayabah (occultation) On The Shi'ah Political Life And Thought*. *History of Islam*.
- ^{5.} [^]Naghiepour et al. (2013). *Reviewing The Rise And Declination Factors Of Shi'a's Diverging Ramifications In Minor Occultation Period*. *Entizar E Moud*.
- ^{6.} [^]Khoshfar, M. (2020). *Explaining Ayatollah Jafari's view on why he was absent from Imam Asr (as) and its necessity*. *Mahdavi Research*.
- ^{7.} [^]Gholamali, M. (2009). *The Origin Of Imam Mahdi's Occultation In Hadiths*. *Ulum-i-hadith*.
- ^{8.} [^]Elahinezahd, H. (2019). *The Examination of Different Aspects of Occultation and its ties to the Imam's Appearance*. *Journal of Hikmat-e-Islami*.
- ^{9.} [^]Shahbaziyan et al. (2020). *Re-investigating the Report of Asbagh ibn Nabatah on the "Number of Imams" and "the Issue of Occultation"*. *Entizar-e-Moud*.
- ^{10.} [^]Ahmadi Kachaii, M. (2017). *Investigating the Symbols of the Twelfth Imam (aj) in Iran, relying on elements of poetry, structure, ceremony, until the end of the tenth century*. *Age of the future*.
- ^{11.} [^]Jafari, J. (2011). *Meeting With Imam Of The Time And The Letter Given To Ali Ibn Mohammad Samori*. *Mashreq-e Mouood*.
- ^{12.} [^]Baqeri et al. (2020). *How to appoint the representatives of Imam Mahdi (aj)*. *The Promised East*.
- ^{13.} [^]Talkhabi et al. (2018). *The depiction of Imam Mahdi and sacred characters in cinema*. *Age of the future*.

14. [^] Behroozi Lak et al. (2019). *An Analysis on the Performance of the Bani Reza Imams in Preparing the Ground for Occultation and Acceptance of the Imam of the Time (A.S).* Entizar-e-Moud.
15. [^] Momeni et al. (2009). *Legal View On The Absence Of Mahdi, Imam Of Time.* Payame Noor Journal Islamic Sciences.
16. [^] Ayati, N. (2010). *A Reflection On Some Dubious Objections On Mahdism.* Mashreq-e Mouood.
17. [^] Salimian, K. (2013). *An Analysis From The Point Of View Of Hadith Studies Regarding The Naming Mohammed For Mahdi.* Mashreq-e Mouood.
18. [^] Reza Rezaie Khanghah. (2022). *Who Is Imam Mahdi, Prophesied In Other Religions, And From Holy Fatima lineage?.* SSRN Journal. doi:10.2139/ssrn.4205069.
19. [^] Reza Rezaie Khanghah. (2022). *Imam Mahdi, Antichrist Or A Promised Saviour Besides Jesus Christ?.* SSRN Journal. doi:10.2139/ssrn.4205060.