



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

## The Philosophy of the Great Occultation of Imam Mahdi and Anticipation Issue (Entezar Faraj)

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### Abstract

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**SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES:** There is no doubt that the subject of Imam Mahdi is a topic agreed upon by Muslims, and many religions and the promised Mahdi is the son of the Prophet Mohammad. 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 except after the permission of Allah, the Exalted, mentioning him, and that is after a long period, hardness of hearts, and the earth being filled with oppression".

**METHOD AND FINDING:** This article, has been done with a historical approach and review of documents and narrative sources and try to use the sources with high accuracy.

**CONCLUSION:** we will address the subject of the philosophy of the great Occultation of Imam Mahdi and we will talk in it about the philosophy of occultation and its benefits in brief, relying on the book "Imam Mahdi and the Promised Day of Khalil Rzq".

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## **Introduction**

Imam Mahdi announced the end of the era of the Minor Occultation and the beginning of the Era of the Great Occultation, in which communication with the Imam is cut off, and its duration is prolonged until the earth is filled with injustice, oppression and corruption.

A few days before the death of the fourth ambassador, Ali bin Mohammad al-Samuri, 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 except after the permission of Allah, the Exalted, mentioning him, and that is after a long period, hardness of hearts, and the earth being filled with oppression”.*  
*(Tusi, 2012: 395)*

In our research, we will address the subject of the philosophy of the great occultation of Imam Mahdi, and we will talk in it about the wisdom of occultation and its benefits briefly briefly, and what is our assignment during the great era of occultation. *(Ref: Rzq, 2008)*

## **Philosophy, Causes and Benefits of the Great Occultation**

Through the hadiths of the Ahl al-Bayt, we can find out the reasons and benefits of the great occultation, and we mention the following narrations:

It was narrated on the authority of Imam Mahdi: As for the reason for what happened from occultation, then God says:

*“O you who believe, do not ask about things that appear to you that would cause you distress, for there was not one of my fathers who did not have a pledge of allegiance to the tyrant of his time, and I will come out When I go out, and there is no pledge of allegiance to one of the tyrants in my neck, and as for the way of benefiting from me during my occultation, it is like benefiting from the sun when it is hidden from the clouds, and I am safe for the people of the earth as the stars are safety for the people of heaven.*

*So close the doors of asking about what does not concern you, and do not burden yourself with the height of what you have sufficed and pray more By hastening the relief, for that is your relief, and peace be upon you, O Ishaq bin Yaqub, and upon those who follow guidance”.*  
*(Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 91)*

In another narration on the authority of Imam Sadiq, he says:

*“The owner of this matter has a disappointment in which every invalidator will be suspicious”.*

I said to him: Why did I make your ransom? He said:

*“For a matter that we were not authorized to reveal to you”.*

I said: What is the point of wisdom in his occultation? He said:

*“The face of wisdom in the absence of those who preceded them from the arguments of God Almighty mentioning him, that the face of wisdom in that does not reveal until after his appearance, just as the face of wisdom does not reveal what Al-Khidr, came to him from breaching the ship, killing the boy, and erecting the wall for Moses, except at the time of their separation. Al-Fadl, that this matter is from the command of God, and a secret from the secret of God, and hidden from the unseen of God, and when we know that he is the Almighty and Wise, we*

*believe that all his actions are wisdom, even if its face is not revealed to us”.* (Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 91)

And in a narration on the authority of Zurara on the authority of Imam Baqir, that he said:

*“The Qa’im had a occultation before his appearance”.*

I said, Why? He said: “He is afraid” and he gestured with his hand to his stomach. Zurara said: It means killing. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 2 and 9-10: 480-481)

And in another narration on the authority of Zurara, on the authority of Imam Sadiq, that he said:

*“The one who rises will have an absence before his resurrection”.*

I said why?

*“He said he fears for himself from slaughter”.*  
(*Saduq, 2011, Part. 2 and 9-10: 480-481*)

And on the authority of Imam Sadiq, that he said:

*“The Qa'im will be sent with no pledge of allegiance to anyone on his neck”.* (*Saduq, 2011, Part. 2 and 9-10: 480-481*)

We can deduce from these narrations several reasons and reasons for the absence of Imam Mahdi, namely:

- The occultation of Imam Mahdi is one of the divine secrets and one of the divine unseen, so we have to believe in it and believe in it based on our belief in God Almighty and His wisdom without asking about it because it is an act of God

Almighty and His actions are all wisdom, even if its face is not revealed to us.

- Occultation is not specific to Imam Mahdi alone; but other occultation happened with some of the previous prophets.
- Fear for the imam when he appears from the slaughter, and the killing of the large number of enemies.
- One of the reasons for this occultation is that the imam becomes a liberator who does not carry a pledge of allegiance to an unjust and oppressive ruler.
- Among the reasons that are considered important for Imam Mahdi for his great occultation, is to give the opportunity and time to reach the truth to all people, so

that the deposits of God will come out from the loins of people, where it is possible that people will be converted to the path of faith and Islam after they were on the path of unbelief and error, so we see that the Commander of the Faithful was not killed a person with a believing offspring in his heart, until he is sure that the person who kills him is not in the trust of God. Likewise, the promised Imam Mahdi will be absent until this factor becomes available, considering that his appearance is directly associated with the immediate start of the Imam's major reform mission.

We can also deduce from Islamic sources and from the

events that accompanied the birth of the Imam, his concealment, and his absence, several benefits, including:

- The major occultation aims to test people, test them, and deliver them, as the occultation of some prophets was a test and a test for previous nations, and the human condition becomes exposed in relation to himself.

Knowledge or faith, in terms of action, this is through what happens during the time of occultation of adversity and tribulation, so that perseverance in religion is one of the difficult things; but in terms of knowledge and faith, this is through faith in the unseen, which is only through those who have strong faith and

knowledge People are tested in faith, submission and ratification.

- One of the important matters is that God Almighty rewards and disciplines a nation by absenting its imam if it does not fulfill its duty towards the Messenger and the imam by carrying out divine commands and prohibitions; but rather turns to disobedience, transgression of limits and harming the prophets by all means. To righteousness and righteousness and realize the importance of the presence of the Prophet and the Imam among its manifestations, and in Islamic history what testifies to us that the Ahl al-Bayt, have been subjected to the most severe harm and torment

such as captivity, imprisonment, killing, displacement and exile, and the nation's failure to perform their duty towards them, and the Imam Mahdi, knew about these matters, That it will be more severe and more severe for him; Because he will come out with the sword, so he has withdrawn and disappeared from this nation; from Imam Baqir, that he said:

*“If God hates us to be neighbors of a people, we will be removed from their backs”.*

- People have different degrees and willingness to be assigned to one another, and it was mentioned in the companions of Imam Mahdi, that they are scholars, nobles,

judges, rulers, and worshipers by night, and lions by day. Some of his appearances in the revival and renewal of religion, spreading knowledge and confronting sinners require higher minds, greater preparations, pure souls, and hearts more fearful of God.

Many schools emerged in the era of the great occultation that claimed to present life, social and economic systems to secure human happiness, and the length of the absence of Imam Mahdi, helps prove the inability of the schools that claimed and claim human perfection, as we see in our time and our present age, which is full of corruption, injustice and murder as a result of corruption.

Governments and ruling regimes that claim human perfection, and before the

appearance of Imam Mahdi, mankind is agitated until God brings his guardian to fill the earth with equity and justice after it has been filled with injustice and oppression.

### **The Costs of the Era of the Great Occultation**

The honorable hadiths were concerned with the costs of the era of occultation by virtue of the practical dimensions that it includes in relation to the movement of man in this period distinguished by many temptations and difficulties in confronting them resulting from the apparent lack of presence of the Imam and the inability to return to him easily.

In this context, we briefly mention the most prominent costs in accordance with what was specified by the honorable hadiths while talking about the most important of them, which involves the embodiment of other costs; namely the duty to wait for the appearance of the Imam.

- Consolidating knowledge of the Imam of the age his absence and the inevitability of his appearance and that he is alive watching things and familiar with human actions and their conditions and awaits the necessary conditions for his appearance, and establishing this knowledge on the basis of authentic textual evidence and sound mental proofs.

The importance of this duty is clear in light of the apparent absence of the Imam in the era of occultation and the resulting doubts, and this knowledge has a remarkable effect in pushing the Muslim person towards constructive reform work on the individual and social levels.

The imam of his time who is pleased with what he sees from the believers of progress and hurt him, i.e. retreat from reform work.

There are honorable hadiths that reported the absence of the Mahdi before it occurred with explicit references to this duty. For example, Kulayni in "Al-Kafi" on the authority of Zurara that Imam Sadiq, said:

*"The Qa'im will be occult. He is the awaited one and he is the one whose birth people doubt".*

Zurara said: May I be sacrificed for you if you realize that time, what should I do?

He said:

*"O Zurara, when did you realize*

*that time, then supplicate with this supplication: Oh God, make yourself known to me, for if you do not know yourself, I will not know your Prophet. Your argument, and if you do not know me, your argument has strayed from my religion”.*

- Among the other important duties that the honorable hadiths confirmed for the believers of the era of occultation is the consolidation of the emotional connection with the awaited Mahdi, the practical interaction with and defense of his lofty goals, and the deep emotional feeling of his leadership. His appearance, curbing his enemies,

giving charity on his behalf, persevering in his visits, and other things mentioned by the noble hadiths. (Ref: *Mousavi Isfahani, 2009*)

- Reviving the matter of the Ahl al-Bayt, which is represented in what that means by working with the pure Islamic that they defended, spreading their ideas, publicizing their oppression and their loyalty, disavowing their enemies, acting on their commandments and the foregoing teachings, and rejecting the return to the tyrant and his governments and returning to the just jurists who made them an argument against People in the time of occultation and seeking God’s help in all of this, as stated in the text:

“And if you become one day when you do not see any of them (The Imams), then seek help from God Almighty and look at the Sunnah that you were upon and follow it and love whom you used to love and hate whomever you hated, how quickly will relief come to you”. (*Saduq, 2011, Part. 8: 328; Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 136*)

- Strengthening the faith entity and advising each other with the pure Islamic right, and advising one another on pouring out, which is one of the costs that are confirmed in the era of absence due to the difficulties

that it includes, and steadfastness on the approach of the Ahl al-Bayt:

*“There will come a time for people when their Imam will be absent from them”. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 15: 330; Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 145)*

These are the most prominent costs related to the era of occultation, and there are costs related to some accidents that occur during it or some signs of appearance, or to be careful when some signs appear close to the time of appearance.

### **The Way to Benefit from the Imam in the Major Occultation**

Although the Imam has a long major occultation that has its causes; but it is necessary to point out an important point

that was mentioned in the hadiths of the Ahl al-Bayt, which is that we can benefit from the Imam from his occultation.

In the hadith on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari that he asked the Prophet: Do the Shiites benefit from the Qa'im, in his occultation? He said:

*“Yes, I swear by the one who sent me with prophecy, they benefit from him, and they are illuminated by the light of his guardianship in his absence, as people benefit from the sun, even if its gloominess the clouds”.* (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 253)

And in another hadith on the authority of Imam Sadiq, that he said:

*“Since God created Adam, the earth has not been devoid of God’s*

*argument in it, whether it is apparent, well-known or hidden, and it is not devoid until the Hour is established of God’s argument in it, and if it were not for that, God would not be worshiped”.* (Juwayni al-Shafi'i, 1978, Vol. 1: 46)

It was mentioned in the signature issued by Imam Mahdi to Ishaq bin Yaqoub:

*“As for the way of benefiting from me during my occultation, it is like benefiting from the sun when the clouds are hidden from view”.* (Tusi, 2012: 177)

We understand from these three hadiths that despite the long absence of the Imam in which corruption and injustice prevail, the earth is not without an Imam who spreads benefit to his followers as the sun

spreads its rays from behind the clouds.

On the other hand, we are certain that the Imam is not devoid of the earth; Because the earth is not devoid of proof.

God Almighty said in the Holy Quran:

*“One day We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imams: those who are given their record in their right hand will read it (with pleasure), and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least; But those who were blind in this world, will be blind in the hereafter, and most astray from the Path”. (Quran, 17: 71-72)*

This text is clear that all people of the time, “All People”, have an Imam whom they will call upon on the Day

of Resurrection, and he will be invoked against them or as a witness against them on the Day of Judgment.

A narration on the authority of Imam Ridha, that he said:

*“We are God’s proofs in His creation, through us God holds the heavens and the earth lest they pass away and through us rain descends and spreads mercy; As the sea waves with its people”. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1 : 202)*

It is understood from this narration that the Imams, and the Imam Mahdi are the proofs of God, and it is not possible for the earth to be devoid of them even if one of them had an absence from his Shiites; Because if the Imam was completely absent, he would not have returned to the earth safe and the land would be tainted with its people.

Therefore, the importance of Imam Mahdi is like a bright star that resembles a flaming mass, which sends its beneficial rays that are beneficial to the earth and interact in humans, animals, plants, air, water, soil and inanimate objects.

The imam who came with the narrations that he is like the sun from behind the clouds is the one with whose presence people have enjoyment and order their lives. (*Qazwini, 2009: 205-206*)

After this presentation, we move on to talking about the duty to wait, which represents the most important costs, and working with it includes most of the previous costs, and we address it within the following paragraphs.

### **The Importance of Waiting**

The honorable hadiths emphasize the importance of waiting for (Faraj) with its general title,

and this applies to Muslims waiting for the appearance of the Imam Mahdi, and the waiting of other peoples and religions for the Savior, who is one of the sons of those peoples. The same applies to the Shiites, in particular, waiting for the appearance of Imam Mahdi.

The imams of Ahl al-Bayt, peace and blessings of God be upon them, described waiting as the best worship for the believer, as it came in the hadith of Imam Ali:

*“Waiting is one of the best acts of worship if it is with the intention of worshiping God, and not a desire for anything from the wreckage of the world”.* (*Barqi, 1992, Part. 1: 291; Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 131*)

Imam Sadiq said:

*“Blessed are the Shiites of the Qai'm who await his appearance in his absence and obey him when he appears. These are the friends of God who do not fear nor grieve”. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 357; Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 150)*

Therefore, waiting for relief is “the greatest consolation”, as Imam Sadiq says, and the person who is waiting is from the group of God’s friends.

Imam Jawad said:

*“The occultation has multiplied and prolonged, so the believers are waiting for its appearance and the skeptics deny it”.*

Since waiting enhances faith and devotion to God Almighty and trust in His wisdom and good care for His servants, it is thus a sign of

good faith in God, so it is not surprising that the honorable hadiths describe it as: “The most beloved of deeds to God”. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 378; Khazzaz al-Qummi, 1980: 279)

Therefore, it is “The best job for My nation”. (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 616; Ibid, 1983, Part. 2: 610-616; Ibn Shu'ba Harrani, 1973: 10-106)

As the Prophet of God says.

*“Waiting proves a person’s connection to his noble Lord, and his practical belief that God Almighty is in control of his affairs, and that he is capable of everything, and directs the affairs of his creatures with his wisdom and mercy over them”.*

Whoever was one of the companions of the existing imam, let him wait. Likewise, he will gain the reward of this jihadist companionship. His is what Imam Sadiq says:

“Whoever among you dies in this matter while waiting for him is like the one who was in the camp of the Qai'm”.  
(*Barqi, 1992, Part. 1: 173; Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 644*)

And he won the reward of the martyr, as Imam Ali says:

*“He who follows our command will be with us tomorrow in Jerusalem barn. Whoever waits for our command is like one who sheds his blood for the sake of God.”*  
(*Saduq, 1983, Part. 10: 625; Majlisi, 2006, Vol. 52: 123; Ibn Shu'ba Harrani, 1973: 115*)

Rather, he enjoys the highest ranks of martyrs.

It is understood from these hadiths that the varying levels of effects reveal the difference in the work of the believer with the requirements of real waiting.

## **Reality of Waiting**

Waiting means:

waiting for the establishment of the dominant state of the Mahdi and the extension of the sultanate of the family of Prophet Mohammad over the entire earth, and filling the earth with justice and equity, and the victory of the righteous religion over all religions, as God Almighty said to His Noble Messenger and promised that, rather it was called by all the prophets.

The day will come in this way when no one but God will be worshiped. (Exalted be He), and nothing of the religion was left hidden behind the veil for fear of anyone. (*Nouri, 2007, Part. 2: 443*)

Waiting includes a heart condition established by the fixed ideological principles of the inevitability of the appearance of the Promised Mahdi and the realization of the goals and messages of the prophets and the hopes and aspirations of mankind at his hands; And the consolidation of true knowledge through the doctrinal evidence of the existence of Imam Mahdi, his absence and his inevitable appearance.

Accordingly, it becomes clear that waiting is not true unless it includes three elements: doctrinal, psychological, and behavioral. Without that waiting, it has no real meaning for the believers except the arbitrariness based on what the Children of Israel said to Moses:

*“O Moses! While they remain there, never shall we be able to enter, to the end of time. Go thou, and thy Lord,*

*and fight ye two, while we sit here (and watch)”.* (Quran. 5: 24)

The result is that we cannot wish humanity well without any positive action for it.

That is why we notice in the honorable hadiths that talk about the subject of waiting, and their emphasis on the knowledge of Imam Mahdi and his role, and the consolidation of the continuous attachment to him in his occultation as a man, and the talk about positive waiting, the practical commitment to loyalty and adherence to the complete Sharia and preparing the believer himself to be a supporter of Imam Mahdi and possessing all the jihadi, ideological and moral qualities necessary to contribute to the completion of his major reform mission, otherwise it will not be a real waiting.

Islamic narrations confirm that the appearance of Imam Mahdi is linked to the sweat and fatigue of the believers, and it brings them to the top of what they hope for, each according to his actions and intentions.

So it became clear that the required legal waiting is a set of conditions without which it cannot be fulfilled, such as the most important thing that the believer bears in the age of occultation. The honorable hadiths spoke about it and Imam Sajjad, compiled them, when he said in his talk on the subject of the Mahdi:

*“The people of the time of his occultation, those who claim his Imamate, those who wait for his reappearance are the best of all people of all time; Because God Almighty gave them intellects, understanding and knowledge what became of occultation*

*for them the status of witnessing, and made them at that time the status of fighters in the hands of the Prophet of God, those who are truly sincere and ours are truthful, and the callers to the religion of God are secretly and openly”.* (Saduq, 2011, Part. 1: 319-320; Tabrisi, 2017: 49-50)

In light of the foregoing, we can mention points that include an explanation of the practical method that the believer must produce to be a true waiter:

- Consolidating her knowledge of the Imam Mahdi, her belief in his Imamate, the exercise of her duties in his absence, knowledge of the nature of his historical role, its dimensions, his duties,

the role of the believers towards him, and the consolidation of their relationship with him.

- Consolidating sincerity in carrying out the various requirements of waiting, purifying it from all impurities and material and psychological purposes, making it purely for God, and striving for His approval. Therefore, waiting is the “best worship”: This pure intention provides a condition in the duty of waiting. (*Ref: Mousavi Isfahani, 2009*)
- Educating the soul and preparing it fully for the support of the Imam through sincere adherence to the teachings of the imams, so that the believer is a true follower of the Imam Mahdi; And sincere in fulfilling the personal

divine and jihadist conditions that are able to support the Imam in achieving his divine purposes, and this is a prelude to his appearance on a personal level.

- Move to pave the way for the emergence of the Mahdi on the social level by calling people to the true religion of God, raising the supporters of the Imam, and calling for his great revolution. The movement of those waiting to prepare for the reappearance and despite all the difficulties, if the conditions were favorable, they called to the religion of God openly, otherwise their movement was secret, without justifying themselves the failure in this primary duty under the pretext of difficult circumstances.

In light of the foregoing, it becomes clear that the real waiting includes a continuous building movement and preparation for the emergence of the expected savior at the individual and social levels, regardless of the difficulties and sacrifices.

Peace be upon his absence and his appearance, and prayers and peace be upon the one who sincerely understands his appearance and drinks from the cup of his gift and knowledge.

In addition to the obligation to wait for the Imam Mahdi in his occultation, there is also the duty to anticipate the appearance of the Imam at all times based on the incoming Sharia texts.

The martyr Syed Mohammad Sadr says:

*“The news that indicates the assignment during the era of occultation itself indicates the necessity of waiting, and the expectation of appearing at all times”.*

Ayatollah Mousavi Isfahani, after citing a group of hadiths indicating the necessity of immediate waiting:

*The intention of anticipating the morning and evening relief is to wait for the promised relief at all times. This happy thing can happen, and there is no doubt that this can happen in All the months and years are in the order of the mastermind. We must wait for him secretly and openly. (Ref: Mousavi Isfahani, 2009)*

It is necessary to complete the research on the subject of the obligation of waiting as one of the most important duties of Muslims in the era of occultation, to indicate the sanctity of despair of reappearance, a principle that is based on a general basis on the Quranic

evidence and that it is one of the evidences of the necessity of waiting. (*The al-Abbas's Holy Shrine, Part. 3: 185-196*)

### **Conclusion**

It is clear and certain that Imam Mahdi is the last of the guardians of the Prophet Mohammad, and his family, and one of the most incumbent duties on the nation is observing its mandate to the last guardians.

What has become clear to us in this research is that the great long-term occultation began since the death of the fourth ambassador of the Imam, and ends with the appearance of the Promised one in which the light of the Imam Mahdi will shine, and mankind is happy to meet him to bring it out of darkness into the light and save it from injustice and oppression and justice and safety prevail among people; and it became clear to us that from the rule of major occultation:

That it is one of the divine secrets, protecting the imam from killing and slaughtering, and that there is no pledge of allegiance to any person on the imam's neck.

Among its benefits is that it aims to discipline the nation, educate and perfect souls, and prove the inadequacy of organizations and rulers who claim social justice; but justice, security, and social and human safety will be obtained by the hand of the Promised Imam, another in front of a pure dynasty.

One of the most important issues that we must point out is that the land is not free of disputes. If the imam was not present on the face of the earth, the land would be polluted by its people. To prepare the ground and build the foundations for his government, educating ourselves fully to support him when he appears.

The thing that we can ask in this context is to make our research focus on the issue of hastening the Imam's reappearance so that we reduce the length of the Imam's occultation, hasten the achievement of the goals of the occultation, and approach the brightness of the Imam's sun.

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