

Philosophy of the Delay of Reappearance with the Presence of Conditions

Question:

Throughout history, we sometimes come across conditions and opportunities in which it is assumed the requisites for reappearance are present, for example, the people's receptiveness to religion, self-sacrifice in the path of Islam, giving their lives, and martyrdom for it was to such an extent or with such fervor and commotion that it appears that rather than 313 people, thousands of people are ready to sacrifice their lives under the command of the Imam (peace be upon him). With the existence of these conditions, what is the secret of the delay of the reappearance?

Answer:

Regarding the presence of the conditions for the reappearance of the Imam of the Age (may Allah hasten his return):

First, no one can claim to know with certainty, that is, say that all the conditions are fulfilled, since this claim itself requires knowledge of all the conditions, since it is possible that the traditions have not comprised an exposition of all of the conditions.

Second, assuming that the conditions are limited to those instances that have come in the traditions, as Shaykh al-Saduq has said, in reality one can still not be sure that those particular 313 companions and the remaining conditions are present.

This is because if all of the conditions and circumstances apparently indicate the presence of the requisites of reappearance, without denying, for example, the existence of pure individuals who can be counted among the 313 companions of the Imam (peace be upon him), we also cannot claim that all of the individuals are like Salman, Abu Dhar, Miqdad, Rashid Hijri, and the people of Karbala'.

In the present situation, with all the claims that are put forward in our society for returning to and aspiring at Islam, which are certainly a matter of pride, we still see that many bring the Divine laws under question in a large number of political, economical, and social issues. This is to such an extent that they regard some religious commandments that are not exclusive to a particular time or place as being restricted to the Prophet's (peace be upon him and his family) time and on this pretext free themselves from responsibility. With the existence of such individuals and events, how can we say that the conditions for reappearance are ready, let alone asking about the reason for its delay?

On this basis, in this issue it is appropriate for us to submit to the command and will of Allah, the All-Knowing, and not forgo the merit of waiting for the reappearance. And as was indicated in the tradition of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar, we should attribute the concealment of the Imam (peace be upon him) to our own actions and always keep the memory of that personage alive in our hearts and try to bring about the requisites of his appearance ever more by reforming our own actions.

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