

Our Role during the Period of Ghaybah!

For: Academy of Learning Islam (ALI)

Overview of Rules:

- Hijab
- Timing
- Classroom environment – taking notes; asking questions...etc
- Success of this class is based on everyone's participation

Subject matter: What is our role during the Period of Ghaybah?

- Before we begin to discuss our role, there are some preliminary discussions which need to be understood:

There is no doubt within Islam (whichever sect we talk about) that there will be someone who will be “**the rightly guided one – al-Mahdi**” who will come during the final period and will rid the world of wrongdoing, injustice and tyranny.

- He will also be the one who will give light to Islam and make it shine over all other religions.

This belief of the ‘Mahdi’ can be found in all the difference sects.

- **This is because Allah SWT has promised in the Qur'an:**

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَ لِيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلِيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

Allah has promised those of you who have faith and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them successors in the earth, just as He made those who were before them successors, and He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely change their state to security after their fear, while they worship Me, not ascribing any partners to Me. And whoever is ungrateful after that it is they who are the transgressors (24:55)

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

And We desired to show favour to those who were abased in the land, and to make them imams, and to make them the heirs (al-qasas 5)

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

Certainly We wrote in the Psalms, after the Torah: " Indeed My righteous servants shall inherit the earth (al-anbiya .105)

- Additionally, no one within Islam can deny the numerous **Ahadith** mentioned from the **Prophet SAW** discussing the coming of the Mahdi: (justice and fairness; injustice and oppression)

قَوْلُهُ ص لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ وَلَدِي
اسْمُهُ اسْمِي وَ كُنْيَتُهُ كُنْيَتِي ...فَيَمْلَأُهَا عَدْلًا وَ قِسْطًا كَمَا مُلِئْتُ جَوْرًا وَ ظُلْمًا

When we look at the sheer number of Ahadith on the Mahdi (both within the Sunni and Shi'a) there is little doubt why we all share a common belief on this idea.

- 657 Ahadith pertaining to the appearance of the Mahdi
- 389 Ahadith which describe him from the Ahlul Bayt AS
- 213 Ahadith which describe him from the children of Ali AS
- 192 Ahadith which describe him from the children of Fatema AS
- 318 Ahadith which describe that he will live for a very long time

Examples:

مِنْ صَحِيحِ أَبِي دَاوُدَ وَ صَحِيحِ التِّرْمِذِيِّ بِإِسْنَادِهِمَا عَنْ عَلِيٍّ ع أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ص قَالَ لَوْ لَمْ
يَبْقَ مِنَ الدَّهْرِ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا [يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ] لَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي يَمْلَأُ الْأَرْضَ عَدْلًا كَمَا
مُلِئْتُ جَوْرًا

ما أسنده أبو داود في صحيحه إلى أم سلمة من قول النبي ع المهدي من عترتي من ولد فاطمة

Hence, there is no denying that there will appear a Mahdi based on the Qur'anic understanding and clear Ahadith.

- However, the difference between the Shi'a and the Sunni is with regards to the specifics of the Mahdi.
 - Will he be born in the future or is he already born?
 - Will he only appear at the end of time or is he already here?

Our belief on this matter is quite simple:

- He AS has already been born and has been taken into occultation by Allah SWT

Questions which need answering:

Question One: How can there be an Imam who is not present amongst the people?

- The role of an Imam, it is to guide and teach the people on how to reach perfection, it is to lead (spiritually and physically)...etc. How is it possible for someone who is not present in front of us to be an Imam?

Answer:

- We see in the Qur'an that Allah SWT describes Prophets who were away from their people.

وَإِعْدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ فِتْنَتٍ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً

And We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and completed them with ten] more [; thus the tryst of his Lord was completed in forty nights (al-A'raf 142)

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And the Man of the Fish, when he left in a rage, thinking that We would not put him to hardship. Then he cried out in the darkness, "There is no god except You! You are immaculate! I have indeed been among the wrongdoers!" So We answered his prayer and delivered him from the agony; and thus do We deliver the faithful.) Al-Anbiya 87-88

- Just because we are not aware of the benefit of an Imam in occultation does not mean there is no benefit.

- فسائل جعل عدم العلم طريقا الى علم بالعدم

- It is like equating lack of knowledge about something to mean it does not exist at all.

- Occultation does not mean that the Imam AS is not able to help us in different ways.

- We see the story of Khidr and Musa AS in the Qur'an

- Khidr AS did many things that if the people knew about it they would have tried to prevent him from doing so

- In the same way, the Imam AS carries out many affairs for our benefit that if we knew about it we would try and prevent him.

- There is no doubt that the general public cannot see the Imam AS, however this does not mean that there are not specific people who have an audience with him.

- As the Imam AS has said:

وَأَمَّا وَجْهُ الْإِنْتِفَاعِ بِي فِي غَيْبَتِي فَكَالِإِنْتِفَاعِ بِالشَّمْسِ إِذَا غَيَّبَهَا عَنِ الْأَبْصَارِ السَّحَابُ

Question Two: How is it possible for a human being to live so long?

Answer:

- Allah SWT in the Qur'an describes the age of P. Nuh

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

Certainly We sent Noah to his people, and he remained with them for a thousand-less-fifty years. Then the flood overtook them while they were wrongdoers (ankaboot 14)

- Additionally, science has proved that if someone takes care of their health and avoids different types of toxins they would be able to live very long lives
 - George Jordac who has written about Imam Ali AS who says he would have lived forever because of his diet
- Additionally, people who ask this question clearly don't have a full understanding of the power of God

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ

They did not regard Allah with the regard due to Him (al-An'aam 91)

- As Allah SWT has described in the Qur'an about Prophet Yunus

فَلَوْ لَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

And had he not been one of those who celebrate Allah's glory, he would have surely remained in its belly till the day they will be resurrected (as-Saafaat 143-144)

- If Allah SWT can keep a whale alive and that which is in it till the day of resurrection; then why is it difficult for Him to keep an Imam alive?

Now, after having proved the coming of the Mahdi AS; and answering any dubious questions, we must ask ourselves what is our role during this period of Ghaybah:

Scholars have written books on this subject, describing in detail what our role is:

- However, I believe there is one 'main role' that we have, and everything else stems from this role.
 - Our role is based on a hadith which is found in both Sunni and Shi'a books:

وَقَدْ رَوَى عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ مَنْ مَاتَ وَلَمْ يَعْرِفْ إِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً

(Bihar 32:331; Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 2:83; Sahih al-Bukhari 5:13; Sahih al-Muslim 6:21)

Based on this Hadith, we understand that our primary role is to 'KNOW' our Imam AS!

- Everything else is secondary!

رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ... بِهِ يُطَاعُ الرَّبُّ وَيُعْبَدُ ، وَبِهِ تُوَصَّلُ الْأَرْحَامُ ، وَيُعْرَفُ الْحَلَالُ مِنَ الْحَرَامِ ، الْعِلْمُ إِمَامُ الْعَمَلِ وَالْعَمَلُ تَابِعُهُ ، يُلْهِمُ بِهِ السُّعْدَاءُ ، وَيُحَرِّمُهُ الْأَشْقِيَاءُ

The quest for knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim... by virtue of it the Lord is obeyed and worshipped, consanguinal relations are maintained, and the lawful is distinguished from the prohibited. Knowledge leads to action and action follows it. The fortunate ones are inspired by it whereas the wretched ones are deprived of it.' (Al-Amali al-Tusi p. 488 no.1069)

- Knowledge of the Imam AS will lead to:
 - Obedience
 - Understanding his Status (with God and with us)
 - Desire to pray for his well-being...etc.

And so, this is where we begin: Knowing our Imam AS

- Knowledge of the Imam AS can be broken up into two parts
 - Al-'Ilmul 'Aam (having to do with the Divinely Appointed Status he and the rest of the Ahlul Bayt AS have received)
 - Al-'ilmul Khaas (having to do with specifics about his life – how much do we really know about him?)
 - DOB, Historical lessons, Periods of Ghaybah...etc
 - What the characteristics of our Imam AS are
 - What does the Imam AS want from us

Al-'Ilmul 'Aam – the Status of Wilayah

- If we do not understand Wilayah – then we have not understood the duties which are incumbent upon us towards the Imam AS
 - And it will subsequently be impossible to form any relationship with him!

What does Wilayah mean?:

Lexically: Wilayah comes from the root word Walaa; which has many different meanings

المالك، العبد، المعتق، والمعتق، والصاحب، والقريب كابن العم ونحوه، والجار، والحليف، والإبن، والعم، والتزِيل، والشريك، وابن الأخت، والوليّ، الربّ، والناصر، والمنعم، والمنعم عليه، والمحِبّ، والتابع،

- A master, slave, emancipator, emancipated, close member of the family, neighbor, guest, son, uncle, partner, nephew, follower, followed, helper, lord, giver, receiver, lover, and of course guardian and friend.

In the 'technical' usage – Wilayah usually means Guardianship, assistance or friendship!

- Hence a Wali or Mawla could mean Guardian, assistant or a friend

Keeping these definitions in mind; one would need to look at the context of the verse and its historical implications to deduce what the intended meaning is:

As far as the Wilayah of Allah SWT: 2 examples:

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَكُمْ نِعَمَ الْمَوْلَى وَ نِعَمَ النَّصِيرِ

And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your Mawla (master): an excellent Mawla and an excellent helper
(8:40)

فَأَقِمْوَا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

So maintain the prayer, give the zakat, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Mawla; an excellent Mawla and an excellent helper (22:78)

- From these verses, it is clear that Wilayat is referring to Guardianship/Authority.
 - Hence Mawla cannot mean Friendship – due to the context
 - And it cannot mean Assistant – because it would be a pointless repetition.
- Therefore; when it comes to Allah SWT – his Wilayah refers to His Guardianship!

Now, Allah SWT, who is the Wali of the faithful, has chosen certain people to be the Wali over the faithful as well!

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

Your Wali is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down (5:55)

- When we examine the historical reasons behind this revelation, and look at the previous verses already discussed:
 - We can positively confirm the following:
 - That Allah SWT when referring to Himself as the ‘Wali’ is not intending ‘Assistant or Friend’; He SWT is making it known that He is the Guardian and the One with Authority!
 - And since the same verb of “Wali” is used in reference to God, the Prophet SAW and Those who believe;
 - It infers the same Guardianship (though on different levels)

It is clear from this verse and then, that the Prophet SAW and the Imams (as we know for sure this verse is referring to them), have been given Wilayah by Allah SWT.

What type of Wilayah (Guardianship/Authority) has been given to them?

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

A faithful man or woman may not, when Allah and His Apostle have decided on a matter, have any option in their matter, and whoever disobeys Allah and His Apostle has certainly strayed into manifest error (33:36)

- Therefore, their authority or guardianship is Complete – Mutlaq
 - Where once we have submitted to it; we have given up our own opinions and decisions and submit to their opinion and decision!

Another point which is important:

- If we accept that Muhammad SAW and the Ahlul Bayt AS are our Walis
 - And if we surrender to their authority and guardianship
 - **We in turn become Auliya (plural of Wali) to them!**

Hence Wilayah is a two way street:

- Allah SWT and the Ahlul Bayt AS are our Wali
 - And we in turn have to strive to become their Wali
 - Example from the Qur'an: (2:257) & (10:62)

اللَّهُ وَلِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

- Example from Hadith:

فَقَالَ صَ مِنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَ عَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ

Be the Wali of the one who is the Wali of him (Ali)

- **Obviously, our Wilayah has a different meaning then their Wilayah**
 - One side is the leader and other side is the disciple
 - One side has to be obeyed and the other side has to be obedient
 - One side is guiding while the other is receiving guidance
 - **But because of the love, closeness and mutual understanding from the two sides, there is an unbreakable bond which is developed!!**
- **And once we have come under the fold of Wilayah, there is nothing which can break that connection!!**

عَنِ الرِّضَا نَحْنُ كَلِمَةُ التَّقْوَى وَالْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقَى

Now, if we understand the complete (Mutlaq) authority and Guardianship which has been given to them

- It will make it significantly easy to:
 - **Obey him; Yearn for him; Pray for him; Miss him; Love him**
 - Again, all of this is impossible without knowledge of his status!

Al-'ilmul Khaas

- **Small Quiz** (Different file)

Once we have knowledge about our Imam AS:

- Al-'Ilmul 'Aam
- Al-'Ilmul Khaas
 - Every other role automatically and seamlessly flows from it

Other roles at the time of Ghaybah (in no particular order):

First: Actively anticipate his arrival

A good friend of mine in Sham said to me: "Me faraj ki intidhaar karrahathaa"

- And this got me thinking, are we truly waiting for the Faraj of our Imam AS?

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص أَفْضَلُ أَعْمَالِ أُمَّتِي أَنْتِظَارُ فَرَجِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ

Actively anticipate relief from Allah SWT

قَالَ الْمُفَضَّلُ بْنُ عُمَرَ سَمِعْتُ الصَّادِقَ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ ع يَقُولُ مَنْ مَاتَ مُتَنَظِرًا لِهَذَا الْأَمْرِ
كَانَ كَمَنْ كَانَ مَعَهُ فِي فُسْطَاطِهِ لَا بَلْ كَانَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الضَّارِبِ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص بِالسَّيْفِ

One who dies anticipating this rule (of the Mahdi AS) is as one who will be with him in his tent. Not only that, but he possesses the rank of one who fought with the sword in the presence of the Prophet SAW (Bihar 52:146)

- How can we personally anticipate his arrival? Discussion

Second: Miss my Imam

- Why? Because he is our Imam; we should long to see him; long to be with him

What do we mean by missing our Imam AS? Not the way one misses winter in the summer.

- The only comparison can be how one misses someone they love dearly

And this is what the Imam AS expects from us and what he teaches us (we find in **Dua Nudba...**)

عَزِيزٌ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تَرَى الْخَلْقَ وَ لَا تُرَى وَ لَا أَسْمَعُ لَكَ حَسِيسٌ وَ لَا نَجْوَى
عَزِيزٌ عَلَيَّ أَنْ أَبْكِيكَ وَ يَخْذُلُكَ الْوَرَى

It pains me that I should see rest of creation yet not see you; and not hear from you so much as a rustle of a whisper. It pains me that I should cry for you while most of humanity deserts you.

إِلَى مَتَى أَحَارُ فِيكَ يَا مَوْلَايَ

Until when must I search and remain baffled at not finding you O my master?

هَلْ مِنْ جَزُوعٍ فَأُسَاعِدَ جَزَعَهُ إِذَا خَلَا هَلْ فَذِيَتْ عَيْنٌ فَسَاعَدَتْهَا عَيْنِي عَلَى الْقَذَى

Is there anyone overwhelmed with grief in whose grief I may share when he finds himself alone?

Is there anyone whose eyes cannot bear his grief so that my eyes may come to their aid?

هَلْ إِلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ أَحْمَدَ سَبِيلٌ فَتُلَقَّ

Is there a way to meet you, O son of Ahmad?

- **And why do I miss him?**

- **Because he is our Imam AS!!**

- We notice things have gone wrong and it is only he who can bring it back to the way it was during the time of the Prophet SAW

أَيْنَ الْمُرْتَجَى لِإِزَالَةِ الْجَوْرِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ أَيْنَ الْمُتَخَيَّرُ لِإِعَادَةِ الْمِلَّةِ وَالشَّرِيعَةِ

Where is he upon whom we rest our hopes so that so that he will end injustice and oppression?

Where is he who has been chosen to bring back the Islamic way of life?

Third: Pray for him

- **We pray for his safety, wellbeing, frustration...etc**

- At every time we should pray for him

- Especially: Day of Arafah, Eid ul Fitr and Adhha, Ashura, 15th of Sha'ban, Shahrul Ramadhan... (27 times listed)

- **Recite Dua Faraj;** Dua Ahad; Dua Nudba; Dua fi Zamanil Ghaiba, Dua e Ma'rifat...etc.

- Dua Ahad:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُجَدِّدُ لَهُ فِي صَبِيحَةِ يَوْمِي هَذَا وَ مَا عِشْتُ مِنْ أَيَّامِي عَهْدًا وَ عَقْدًا وَ بَيْعَةً لَهُ فِي عُنُقِي لَا أَحُولُ عَنْهَا وَ لَا أَزُولُ أَبَدًا

O Allah renew for him my covenant, pledge and allegiance on my neck in the morning of this day of mine and whatever days (of my life) I live. I shall never turn away from it nor let it ever vanish.

- **Take out Sadqa** for his protection and safety

- We take out sadaqa for ourselves, but the Imam AS is more valuable than us.

These are just some of the things we can do in preparation and waiting for our Imam AS.

- The list is extensive; however this is a good starting point.

Anyone else have any other things which they would like to share?

End with some words of advice from our 12th Imam AS:

If you crave for divine guidance and admonition you shall be blessed with it. Seek and you shall find, so lock the door of such queries which do not help you. (Do not bother to know that which does not enlighten you.)

Indeed we are not heedless about your conditions nor can we forget you (your needs and supplications). Hence every one of you should perform that which wins our love and abstain from all things that arouse our hatred and wrath.

Pray to God immensely for hastening my emergence & deliverance, for truly therein lies the deliverance of you all

Dua taught to us by our 12th Imam AS:

Oh Allah!

Grant us the good fortune of being obedient [to You], and keep us away from disobedience.

- Let us be sincere in our intentions;
 - Provide us with the knowledge of what is sacred.
 - Honor us with guidance and honesty, and direct our tongues to what is right and wise;
 - fill our hearts with learning and knowledge, and cleanse our stomachs from what is forbidden and of doubt.
 - Prevent our hands from committing oppression and theft, lower our gaze [out of modesty] from immorality and disloyalty, and block our ears from hearing foolish talk and slander.
 - Oblige our learned scholars with piety and sincere advice, and those who are learning with restrain and desire to learn.
 - Bless those who are with desire to follow the religious teachings,
 - impart recovery and comfort to the Muslims suffering from illness and bless those dead among them with kindness and mercy.
 - Award dignity and peace of mind to old people,
 - Confer repentance and turning away from sin to our young people,
 - Bestow modesty and chastity to our women.
 - Supply the rich with humility and abundance; and the poor with patience and contentment.
 - Let those fighting in Your way be victorious, and the imprisoned be freed.
 - Let the rulers be just and kind and the ruled receive just treatment and good character;
 - Bless those who are on pilgrimage with adequate support, and helping them complete what is obligatory on them
- With Your Grace and Kindness , O Most Kind!

Point of reflection from me:

- How will it be when our Imam AS comes?
 - Will we be able to meet him whenever we want?

- I believe we will; I believe it will be paradise on earth...etc.

أَيْنَ بَابُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي مِنْهُ يُؤْتَى أَيْنَ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي يَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْهِ الْأَوْلِيَاءُ أَيْنَ السَّبَبُ الْمُتَّصِلُ بَيْنَ
الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ

Where is the gateway to God that is the only way one can approach him?

Where is the focal point to which God's friends turn their attention?

Where is the lifeline linking the inhabitants of earth to the sky?