



The Scope of Imam al-Mahdi's Imamate over Extraterrestrial Beings in Verses and Traditions*

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Abstract

One of the divine promises to the prophets in the Quran is the subject of empowerment, which can be generalized to the righteous global government following the reappearance of His Holiness Hujjat(PBUH). As the ultimate divine government and the conclusion of all other sovereignties, the global government of Imam al-Mahdi utilizes all available and unknown capacities to overcome anti-truth and truth-evading currents through the state of truth. This research has been conducted using a qualitative content analysis method and library resources, aiming to elucidate rational life beyond the earth and the encompassing nature of the Imamate of Baqiyatullah over them. It appears that the existence of extraterrestrial beings is undeniable, considering the implications of the Quran and the explicit statements of

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the traditions. On the other hand, according to transmitted traditions, the Imam of the Age(PBUH), the axis of the universe of possibility , holds responsibility for the guidance and Imamate of all beings in all celestial spheres, both on earth and beyond. Since existential guardianship is the tool and necessity of this global management, through this guardianship, he is able to exert influence across the expanse of the universe and guide affairs; therefore, divine guardianship and administration in the system of creation during the periods of occultation and reappearance rests in his hands.

Keywords

Extraterrestrial beings, al-Mahdi, Verses and Traditions, Scope of Imamate.

Introduction

The Holy Quran is the focal text and point of reference for all Islamic denominations, and Mahdism is a shared belief among all of them. The Promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is an undeniable necessity in the world as the divine proof and the continuation of His vicegerency, constituting one of the definitive and absolute truths of the order of creation; he is considered an absolute necessity of the existential order because the Perfect Man is the intermediary of divine grace in the universe, and through him the universe attains divine grace; thus, he is God's proof over His creatures. The Infallible Imams (peace be upon them), and especially the Imam of the Age, are the complete manifestation of the divine names and attributes. Existential guardianship is a manifestation of divine lordship and administration entrusted to them. This administration is global and encompassing (Mousavi Khomeini, R, pp. 30-50, digital version 1997, p. 23).

The universality of the Imam of the Age means that he is not only the leader of the Shias, but the proof of God over all humanity and rational beings, and the macro-management of the universe during the periods of occultation and reappearance rests in his hands. Existential guardianship is the tool and necessity of this global management. Through this guardianship, he is able to exert influence across the expanse of the universe and guide affairs. Despite his apparent occultation, the Imam of the Age, through existential guardianship, is in spiritual and metaphysical contact with all those whose guidance he is responsible for and is aware of their affairs. This connection lays the groundwork for general guidance and provides the prerequisites for the reappearance.

One of the topics that has engaged the minds of many thinkers is the existence of extraterrestrial beings—a matter that has been explicitly and implicitly pointed out in the Holy Quran and Islamic

traditions, along with their Imamate and guidance. Numerous theses, books, and articles have been written from various perspectives regarding His Holiness Hujjat, including Imamate, government, and existential and legislative guardianship, which are close to the subject of this article, such as:

The article "The Existence of Living Beings in the Heavens" (Rezaee Isfahani and Arab, 2010). This article examines the issue of life in the heavens from the perspective of the Quran, traditions, and empirical sciences, and states that this article demonstrates that the existence of life in the heavens is accepted by the Holy Quran and that it theorized scientifically prior to modern science.

The article "The Quran and the Global Government of Imam al-Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance)" (Looke Alikhan, 2014), which, by examining the verses, concludes that the world has a day ahead in which a government and society will be formed that, on the one hand, is connected with the Creator of existence and, on the other hand, is linked with righteous deeds, and the righteous will inherit the earth.

What this article addresses is the scope of the domain of the Imamate of the Imam of the Age, the Promised Mahdi, not only on earth but across all celestial spheres, which clarifies the distinction of this writing from other studies. Therefore, what this research seeks to answer is the following question: Is the Master of the Affair solely the Imam of humans residing on earth, or is he the Imam of every being subject to religious obligations (*mukallaf*) throughout the entire universe, in every celestial sphere, both on earth and beyond?

1. Quranic and Narrative Evidences on the Existence of Extraterrestrial Beings

Extraterrestrial beings in verses and traditions: The speech of the Quran and Hadith, explicitly or implicitly, concerns beings living in other

spheres. These verses and traditions point to the creation of other worlds and the life of multiple beings within them, which are under the general and infinite system of God's creation.

A) Quranic Evidences

In several verses of the Quran, reference is made to countless beings in celestial spheres, some of whom reside outside the earth, including the verses: «مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ» "those in the heavens and on earth" (Al 'Imran: 83, Yunus: 66, and Ra'd: 15), and verse 44 of Surah al-Isra: «تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ» "The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them glorify Him," as well as other instances that refer to rational beings. Words such as «الْعَالَمِينَ» "the worlds" «فَضَّلْتَكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ» "and exalted you above the worlds" (Baqarah: 122) and verse 33 of Al 'Imran, wherein God names prophets who were chosen over the worlds, using the plural word "worlds" in the verse, point to different worlds.

Verse 1 of Surah al-Buruj, which speaks of the mansions of the stars. Verse 54 of Surah al-A'raf, after stating the creation of the heavens and the earth and the subjection of the sun, moon, and stars, attributes them to God, stating that "Lord of the worlds («رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ»)" is the Lord of all worlds and realms, not just the two worlds of this life and the hereafter. Verses 3 and 9 of Surah Saba state that nothing in the heavens and the earth is hidden from Him; thus, there must be something in the heavens and an occurrence taking place that is not hidden from God. Furthermore, verse 5 of Surah al-Saffat, "Lord of the Easts," and various other instances suggest to the human mind God's attribute of lordship over realms other than the earth.

Among the Quranic indications regarding other celestial spheres and the existence of extraterrestrial life within them is the verse: «وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا مِنْ دَائِرَةٍ وَهُوَ عَلَى جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ» "And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and

whatever living creatures He has dispersed throughout them, and He is able to gather them together whenever He wills" (Shura: 29). The phrase «ما بث فيهما من دابة» "whatever He has dispersed throughout them" explicitly points to the existence of living creatures in the heavens, because the dual pronoun «فيهما» "in both of them" refers to both the heavens and the earth. Therefore, interpreting this phrase as referring solely to the earth is considered highly implausible. Likewise, interpreting *dābbah* as the angels of heaven is also deemed improbable, because *dābbah* is generally applied to material living creatures, not immaterial beings such as angels (Makarem, 1992, vol. 20, p. 439; Ibn Ashur, 1999, vol. 25, p. 158). *Dābbah* refers to living and moving creatures scattered throughout the heavens and the earth. This concept encompasses both microscopic organisms and giant animals, all of whom in some way glorify the Truth (Makarem, 1992, vol. 20, p. 437).

The author of *Al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir* suggests the possibility of the existence of beings in the heavens that have movement and motion there, just as some contemporary scholars have also considered the existence of inhabitants on Mars to be probable (Ibn Ashur, 1999, vol. 25, p. 158). The author of *Tafsir-e Noor* has also considered the aforementioned verse as evidence for the residence of living and moving creatures in the heavens (Qara'ati, 2009, vol. 4, p. 530). Other exegetes have similarly derived the interpretation of the possibility of life in the heavens—in other words, on planets—which is raised as a scientific theory derived from the Quran (Rezaee Isfahani, 2008, vol. 1, p. 95). Allamah [Tabatabai] also defined the word *dābbah* as meaning any moving creature possessing motion and life, thus encompassing living animals, and states that it is apparent from the outward meaning of the verse that there are also moving creatures in the heavens (Tabatabai, 1995, vol. 18, p. 84).

Therefore, most commentators have considered *dābbah* to mean material and living creatures that include both terrestrial and celestial beings (based on the apparent meaning of the verse), and interpreting *dābbah* as angels or immaterial beings has been deemed highly implausible. Scientists have not yet clearly discovered beings on other spheres, but they have discovered planets where the probability of life is very strong; such as the red dwarf star, which is only 105 light-years away from us and can be a habitable world. In an orbit close to this cold and dim star, two rocky exoplanets have been found, one of which, namely "Lp 890-9b," is located at such a distance from its sun that it can easily form life within itself; it is 60 percent larger than Earth, its distance from its sun is similar to the distance between Earth and the sun, the probability of water as the fluid of life in it is high, and it possesses other necessary conditions for life (Scientists' views on the probability of life in galaxies, News Code 8340875, www.yjc.ir/0yzqqf, February 2023).

B) Narrative Evidences

Several traditions have been transmitted from the Infallible Imams (peace be upon them) regarding the existence of beings in celestial spheres, and these beings take various forms. Some possess perception and understanding, and are therefore subject to religious obligations (*mukallaf*) from God and in need of a guide, while others possess a lower level of perception and naturally possess innate guidance like terrestrial creatures. Among these traditions are:

The tradition of Imam al-Baqir in the exegesis of the verse (Al-Rahman: 33), wherein he states: "When God wishes to effect a change (*badā*) and gather the creatures He has kept hidden for an essential matter, He commands a proclaimer to call out so that humans and jinn gather in the blink of an eye. He commands the first (lowest) heaven to

descend, and then commands the descent of the second heaven, which is twice the size of the first. When the inhabitants of the first heaven see the inhabitants of the second, they think the Lord has come, and it is said to them: No, rather the command and decree of the Lord have come, until all the heavens descend, with each one positioned behind the other while each is double the size of the preceding one. And the command of God also descends accompanied by a canopy of clouds and angels, and affairs are carried out. Then God commands a proclaimer to call out, and the aforementioned verse is recited"¹ (Qomi, 1984 , vol. 2, p. 77; Majlesi, 1983 , vol. 7, p. 117; Huwaizi, 1994 , vol. 5, p. 195; Bahrani, 1994 , vol. 5, p. 238).

The implication of the verse is that man can leave the earth and planets by means of *sulṭān*, that is, with superior force. Until now, man has been able to leave the earth and the moon. The earth and planets have a gravitational force and a specific boundary, and man, by means of a superior force such as spacecraft, has overcome the gravitational force of the earth and the moon, leaving them through centrifugal force and other means.

As some exegetes have not only considered ascension across the diameters of the heavens and the earth to be impossible, but have stated: Mankind, through the power of science and the invention of instruments, has provided the means whereby they have become privileged to travel in the heavens and other spheres (Banu Amin, 1982, vol. 13, p. 29), and some, such as Makarem, have also referred to human space travel under the condition of possessing scientific and industrial dominion (Makarem, 1992, vol. 23, p. 149). Banu Amin stated that the reason

١. «إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا بَدَأَ لَهُ أَنْ يُبَيِّنَ خَلْقَهُ وَ يَجْمَعَهُمْ... حَتَّى يَنْزِلَ كُلُّ سَمَاءٍ يَكُونُ كُلُّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْأُخْرَى...»
 "Indeed, when God wishes to reveal His creation and gather them... until every heaven descends, with each one positioned behind the other..."

some ancient exegeses interpreted the verse as the state of the Day of Judgment or death was because in those times, ascension across the diameters of the heavens and the earth was considered impossible (Banu Amin, 1982, vol. 13, p. 29). Therefore, according to these commentators, the possibility of ascension and space travel to other spheres is feasible. The tradition points to the existence of living and obligated beings in the heavens and other spheres, and that it is only with extraordinary force that one can access those planets, obtain news of them, and establish communication.

Since the address «يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ» "O company of jinn and humans, if you are able to pass beyond the regions of the heavens and the earth..." encompasses all the heavens and not just our planet Earth «يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ», the Imam explained the interpretation of the verse regarding crossing the regions of the heavens and the earth under the condition of possessing dominion (*salṭānah*). Therefore, it is understood from the explicit text of the tradition ("...and when the inhabitants of the lowest heaven see it, they will say... «فَإِذَا رَأَوْهَا أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا قَالُوا»") that if man achieves this dominion, he will become aware of living and obligated beings in other spheres.

The purpose of the descent of the first, second, and other heavens is the descent of the beings residing in those heavens, because the Imam describes the passage of celestial beings through the regions of the heavens at a specific location by God's command, though it is not specified where that location is. Another point is that each of the heavens is double the size of the preceding one. Scientifically, scientists have proven that some planets in various galaxies are several times larger than others and vary in size, which "each one is behind the other and is double the one adjacent to it" in the tradition confirms. And the

statement "Then God commands a proclaimer to call out, 'O company of...'" at the end of the tradition indicates the gathering of humans and jinn who are present at the session and are the addressees of the verse and tradition. Another point of the tradition is that the God of all of them is the One and Only God; they know Him and seek His command. At the beginning of the tradition, it says that when God wills *badā* and wishes to reveal His creatures, it means these creatures are hidden from our knowledge, and this doctrinal deduction shows that with God's help, they can be reached. The existence of extraterrestrial beings was not only undiscovered by the people and scientists at that time, but scientists still only hold a strong probability regarding the existence of such beings, without having achieved access to them yet.

Another tradition discussing extraterrestrial beings and their worlds is the tradition of Imam al-Sadiq in the exegesis of the verse "And He creates what you do not know" (An-Nahl, 8), wherein, quoting the noble Messenger (PBUH and his progeny), he speaks of spheres like the earth, numbering thirty-one, and states: "You live on one of them, and you have no knowledge of the rest"¹ (Ibn al-Ash'ath, n.d., p. 242; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 7, p. 602).

Similar to this hadith is the tradition of Imam al-Baqir, who glanced at the sky and said: "O Aba Hamzah, this dome is that of our father Adam, and truly Almighty God has thirty-one domes besides it; within them are creations that have not disobeyed God for the blink of an eye" (Majlesi, 1983, vol. 1, p. 256).

The first tradition points to habitable spheres in the galaxies

١. لِلّٰهِ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالٰى اِحْدَى وَ ثَلَاثُونَ قُبَّةً مِنْهَا وَاحِدَةٌ اَنْتُمْ فِيْهَا ثَلَاثُونَ قُبَّةً اَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ بِهَا...».

"For God, the Blessed and Exalted, are thirty-one domes, of which one is that which you are in, and thirty domes you do not know about..."

where beings live on some of them, because it utilizes the phrase "you are within it." In the second tradition, the dome of Adam is the earth, and the Imams are presenting instances of earths under the name of domes to the audiences of their time so that their sphericity would be comprehensible.

The Commander of the Faithful¹ states: "These stars in the sky are cities like the cities on earth, connected to each other by a column of light at a distance of 250 years: هَذِهِ النُّجُومُ الَّتِي فِي السَّمَاءِ مَدَائِنٌ مِثْلُ الْمَدَائِنِ الَّتِي فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرْبُوطَةٌ كُلُّ مَدِينَةٍ إِلَى عَمُودٍ مِنْ نُورٍ طَوَّلُ ذَلِكَ الْعَمُودِ فِي السَّمَاءِ مَسِيرَةُ مِائَتَيْنِ وَخَمْسِينَ سَنَةً" (Qomi, 1984, vol. 2, p. 219; Majlesi, 1983, vol. 55, p. 91). This tradition can be considered apparent in the existence of structures or worlds similar to terrestrial cities outside the solar system. The author of *Tafsir-e Nem* has interpreted the luminous columns as an expression of gravitational and repulsive waves between spheres (Makarem Shirazi, 1992, vol. 10, pp. 111-112).

Likewise, the Imam states that the purpose of "And by the sky full of paths ((وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ))" is that the sky possesses fine creatures: "Ibn al-Kawwa asked the Commander of the Faithful about the saying of the Almighty, 'And by the sky full of paths,' and he said: 'Possessing fine creation'"

«سَأَلَ ابْنُ الْكَوَّاءِ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ قَالَ ذَاتِ الْخَلْقِ الْحَسَنِ» (Majlesi, 1983, vol. 55, p. 92).

The tradition of Imam al-Baqir speaks of other suns and moons and numerous planets and the beings residing in them, which are located at a distance of forty years beyond our sun and moon, to whom inspiration comes like bees, and they have no knowledge of the events of the earth;² (Majlesi, 1983, vol. 30, p. 99; Hilli, 2000, p. 74; Bahrani Esfahani,

1. Amir al-Mu'minin

۲. «إِنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ هَذِهِ أَرْبَعِينَ عَيْنَ شَمْسٍ.. فِيهَا خَلْقٌ كَثِيرٌ مَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ آدَمَ».

1993 , vol. 19, p. 196; Barazesh, 2015 , vol. 16, p. 376). This tradition can corroborate traditions that speak of inhabitants in other spheres. The indication of the tradition regarding the existence of a number of suns and moons expresses the abundance of planets similar to the earth, sun, and moon of us earthlings in the galaxies, with a great distance between each of them, and they have inhabitants who, like us, benefit from the advantages of their sun and moon. The quantity and distance stated by the Imam in the tradition are not limited to that specific amount, but merely convey abundance and multiplicity. Perhaps their comparison to bees is because they are not conscious beings like humans, but possess a lower degree of understanding. This tradition serves as confirmation...

Another tradition pointing to extraterrestrial creatures is the tradition of Imam Sajjad, who states: "Do you suppose that God has not created any creature other than you? Indeed, by God, God has created a million Adams and a million worlds, and you, by God, are at the end of all these worlds¹ ... (لَقَدْ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ...) قَالَ أَتُظَنُّ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَخْلُقْ خَلْقًا سِوَاكُمْ بَلَى وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ...)" (Majlesi, 1983 , vol. 5, p. 25).

Therefore, paying attention to the verses, one can arrive at the conclusion that apart from our inhabited earth of humans, there are unknown creatures in the space of the sky who not only have the conditions for life but reside therein, and the traditions strengthen the probability of the existence of such beings, some of whom possess intellect and thought. The Creator of all these creatures is God, and according to divine teachings in the Quran and belief in the Resurrection, every possessor of intellect is in need of guidance and the

¹Indeed, beyond these are forty springs of the sun... in them is a multitude of creation who do not know that God created Adam."

sending of messengers. Based on the rule of grace (*lutf*) and the verse "And never would We punish until We sent a messenger" (Al-Isra: 15), God has not withheld this grace from His creatures. Of course, the aforementioned traditions do not specify the type of messengers—whether they are like human messengers or not. It must be noted that if there are beings in spheres, planets, galaxies, and all realms and higher heavens, their characteristics and traits are certainly proportionate to the specific realm in which they live; just as a terrestrial creature cannot live in water, and a marine creature cannot live on land. Now the question is: Do the creatures living on other planets who need a guide have guides of their own, or do the very prophets and vicegerents commissioned by God on planet Earth guide and direct them as well, just like the jinn (Al-Jinn: 13)? The answer will come in the next discussion.

2. Scope of Imamate and Proof over Divine Creatures

In verses of the Holy Quran, God speaks of the possibility of utilizing existence, human abilities and power, and achieving this dominion—a dominion which, *a fortiori*, the prophets and their successors among the Infallible Imams (peace be upon them) possess twofold and with divinely bestowed knowledge (*'ilm-e laduni*). This benefit is not solely restricted to the earth and its apparent bounties, but encompasses the heavens and hidden bounties as well: ﴿أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً﴾ (Luqman: 20). To interpret the aforementioned verse, the Messenger of God (PBUH and his progeny) said to the people around him: "Tell me, what is the first blessing by which God honored and tested you?"

They spoke of livelihood, food, children, and spouses. When the

Prophet (PBUH and his progeny) asked the Commander of the Faithful to recount those blessings, he stated: "Almighty God created me when I was nothing, showed goodness to me, and made me living rather than dead, then brought me into existence in the best form and most steadfast composition. He made me thoughtful and aware, not foolish and heedless. He provided me with perceptive faculties... Then He subjected for me His heaven and His earth, and whatever is in them and between them of His creation..."¹ (Majlesi, 1983 , vol. 40, p. 175; Ameli Nabati, 1964 , vol. 2, p. 13; Huwaizi, 1994 , vol. 4, p. 212; Barazesh, 2015 , vol. 11, p. 564).

After enumerating the apparent and hidden divine blessings bestowed upon himself, the Commander of the Faithful—referencing the beginning of the aforementioned verse—expresses how the heavens, the earth, and everything between them from among God's creations have been subjected to him. This means the tools that enable man to subjugate the heavens and the earth are things inherent to the existence of His Eminence and all other human beings. The blessings to which the Imam refers are general rather than individual, since all those favors are designed for all human beings, both men and women, albeit manifesting in different ways for each, a point to which the verse "سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ" (He has subjected for you) testifies. Another important point is that God does not speak solely of terrestrial subjugated entities—even though each is addressed partially in various verses—rather, He speaks of the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, and other phenomena; things that, during the time of the Prophet, could only be gazed upon.

١. ... فَقَالَ ﷺ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَنِي وَلَمْ أَكُ شَيْئاً مَذْكُوراً وَأَنْ أَحْسَنَ بِي فَجَعَلَنِي حَيّاً لَا مَوْتاً... وَأَنْ سَخَّرَ لِي سَمَاءَهُ وَأَرْضَهُ وَ مَا فِيهِمَا وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا مِنْ خَلْقِهِ... .

("...Then he (peace be upon him) said: Indeed, God created me when I was not a thing remembered, and He showed goodness to me, making me living rather than dead... and He subjected for me His heaven, His earth, and whatever is in them and between them of His creation...").

However, "سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ" means: you, O human being, can benefit from them, even gain mastery over them, provide the means to travel to them, and free yourself from the Earth's gravity. Today, we easily understand the meaning of such verses—traveling to the Moon and other celestial bodies, and building land, marine, and space vehicles. But at that time, people only understood the taming of horses, camels, and certain animals, and considered the ultimate utilization of the sun, the moon, and the stars to be the calculation of night and day, seasons, and years.

As some ancient commentaries have interpreted "He has subjected for you" as the subjugation of the sun, the moon, the stars, and rain, and benefiting from them (Qomi, 1984, vol. 2, p. 293; Tabarsi, 1993, vol. 9, p. 112), they state that because they are of use to us, they are in our subjugation so that we may use them in any way we desire (Tabarsi, 1993 AD, vol. 9, p. 112). Some commentators have described celestial and terrestrial subjugated entities separately: what is subjugated to man from the heavens consists of the sun, the moon, the stars, clouds, and winds, while what is subjugated on earth consists of mountains, rivers, ships, trees, and vegetation. "أَمْ سَبَّحَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَهُ" refers to the abundance of apparent blessings, namely the balanced nature of creation and provision (Muqatil ibn Sulayman, 2003 AD, vol. 3, p. 436; Tabari, 1992 AD, vol. 21, p. 49).

Allameh, in describing the meaning of subjugation, states that the entire universe flows with a single, unified order and is interconnected, and all of them are connected and related to man in some way, such that man can benefit from them, both small and large. Allameh considers human utilization of terrestrial and celestial beings to be ever-increasing and expanding, and regards it as one of man's vital advantages (Tabatabai, 1995, vol. 18, p. 246).

Al-Suyuti, by narrating a tradition from Ibn Abbas, has

attributed the subjugation of the heavens and the earth to a man from the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet: «الرجل ما كان ليأتي بهذا الا رجل من أهل بيت النبي ﷺ» "This man would not bring this forth except for a man from the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet" (Al-Suyuti, 1983, vol. 6, p. 34). Therefore, man has the ability to benefit from " «ما فى السموات و ما فى الارض» whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth" by divine permission, and a fortiori, the Imam of the Age (may Allah hasten his reappearance) can have the greatest share of subjugation regarding these divine blessings. Imam Kazim, in interpreting the aforementioned verse, stated that the apparent blessing is the manifest Imam, and the hidden blessing is the absent Imam¹ (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 24, p. 53; Ibn Shahrashub, 1960, vol. 4, p. 180; Ibn Babawayh, 1976, vol. 2, p. 368). This narration indicates the necessity and presence of the blessing of Imamate in the human realm.

The subjugation of the entire existence, from the heavens and the earth, for human beings points to the immense knowledge that man is capable of attaining, as well as the know-how of utilizing each of them. Up to now, man has benefited from many of the resources that God has placed for him in the earth and the heavens, and has, so to speak, brought them into his subjugation. He uses electrons on a vast scale, utilizes solar power to generate electricity, exploits various types of bacteria, microbes, and viruses as well as different types of waves, and there are still many blessings awaiting human discovery that remain unknown to us. Of course, it must be noted that the higher human knowledge becomes, the greater the utilization of these divine resources can be. Keeping in mind the narration (25 parts out of the 27 parts of knowledge that will be unlocked for humanity by the Imam of the Age, may Allah hasten his reappearance, in the end times), the greatest subjugation of the

١. «سَأَلْتُ عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ.. الْبَاطِنَةُ الْإِمَامُ الْغَائِبُ».

"I asked about the statement of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious... 'the hidden [blessing] is the absent Imam.'"

heavens and the earth belongs to a man from the progeny of the Prophet, to which numerous narrations have also pointed.

Among the traditions that express the scope of Imamate is the narration from Imam Sadiq who states: "Indeed, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has twelve thousand worlds, each of which is larger than the seven heavens and the seven earths, and none of the worlds of Allah are aware of another, and I am the proof over all of them"¹ (Ibn Babawayh, 1983, vol. 2, p. 639; Majlisi, 1983, vol. 27, p. 41; Huwayzi, 1994, vol. 1, p. 16; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 16, p. 378).

The Imam is referring to other worlds, which likely means celestial bodies, and [indicating] that living and morally responsible beings live in them, and he is not only aware of them but is also the proof and Imam over all of them. The narration is cited in explanation of the verse: «سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ» "seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof" (At-Talaq: 12). Apparently, the narration states that twelve worlds actually exist, and in those worlds, there are people of insight who have no news of the other worlds. However, it is not stated whether these worlds are material or immaterial. Since immaterial worlds are aware of each other and of the material world, the material world must be intended. Another point is that, based on the principles of Imami theology, the moral responsibility (taklif) of a rational and free-willed being is intertwined with divine guidance, the completion of proof, and the appointment of a divine proof; therefore, if there are rational and morally responsible beings in other worlds, the

١. «إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ أَلْفَ عَالَمٍ كُلُّ عَالَمٍ مِنْهُمْ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ سَبْعِ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَ سَبْعِ أَرْضِينَ مَا تَرَى عَالَمٌ مِنْهُمْ أَنَّ لِلَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ عَالَمًا غَيْرَهُمْ وَأَنَا الْحُجَّةُ عَلَيْهِمْ».

"Indeed, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has twelve thousand worlds, each of which is larger than the seven heavens and the seven earths. None of those worlds see that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has a world other than them, and I am the proof over them."

fundamental need of theirs for a proof is defensible.

The exegetical work of Ibn Abbas states in the commentary on verse 12 of Surah At-Talaq: "In each of the seven earths, there has been a prophet like your prophet throughout time"¹ (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 57, p. 92; Al-Suyuti, 1983, vol. 6, p. 238). In addition to indicating the existence of rational beings, this narration also confirms the dispatching of messengers and the utilization of prophets, which is followed by the Imamate of the Infallible Imams. Therefore, one group of narrations speaks of extraterrestrial beings—some of whom are rational—while another group emphasizes the authority (hujiyyah) of the Imams, including the Mahdi, the Master of the Age (may Allah hasten his reappearance), over all inhabitants of the earth and the heavens, meaning all planets.

Furthermore, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, speaks of a world beyond Mount Qaf, over which His Eminence encompasses, guards, witnesses, and transcends. He states that just as he is aware of our world, if he wishes, he can monitor or be present in the entire world and across the seven heavens and the earth in less than the twinkling of an eye (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 54, p. 336). A narration close to this one from the Noble Messenger, in the commentary on the final part of verse 8 of Surah An-Nahl, mentions extraterrestrial beings beyond Mount Qaf, each having a distinct form of their own and living a life different from us humans, with various natures, not being created from clay like us. His descriptions of those beings are so clear and vivid that no doubt remains in the human mind regarding the existence of those beings (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 54, p. 348; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 7, p. 602), and it can serve as

١. «قَالَ سَبْعُ أَرْضِينَ فِي كُلِّ أَرْضٍ نَبِيٌّ كَنَبِيِّكُمْ وَآدَمُ كَأَدَمَ وَنُوحٌ كَنُوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمُ كِإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعِيسَى كِعِيسَى».
"He said: 'Seven earths; in every earth there is a prophet like your prophet, an Adam like your Adam, a Noah like your Noah, an Abraham like your Abraham, and a Jesus like your Jesus.'"

corroboration for the narration of Imam Ali. The Commander of the Faithful did not make reference to the inhabitants of the heavens, and the narration demonstrates the Imam's epistemic encompassing and a type of existential dominance over the worlds beyond the human realm.

Among the traditions that discuss how the Infallible communicates with other rational beings who have a language other than Arabic is the narration of al-Salt, who asked Imam al-Rida: "How do you know all languages and speak with everyone in their own language?" The Imam replied: "I am God's proof among the people, and how could a person be God's proof over the people while not knowing their languages? Has the statement of the Commander of the Faithful not reached you, where he says, 'I have been granted *fasl al-khitab* (decisive speech).' The meaning of *fasl al-khitab* is knowledge of all languages"¹(Majlisi, 1983, vol. 26, p. 190; Majlisi, 1992, vol. 22, p. 145; Huwayzi, 1994, vol. 2, p. 444; Bahrani, 1994, vol. 4, p. 646; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 11, p. 458).

God considers different languages and dialects as among His signs (Ar-Rum: 22) and states in another verse that He bestowed *fasl al-khitab* upon Prophet David (Sad: 20). Imam al-Rida states that this knowledge, just as it was given to Imam Ali, has also been granted to him, interpreting *fasl al-khitab* as knowledge of all languages and reasoning: "How can I be the Imam of all the people of the world while not knowing their language?" He introduces the Commander of the

١. «إِنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ قَافٍ عَالَمًا لَا يَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ غَيْرِي وَ أَنَا الْمُحِيطُ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَ عِلْمِي بِهِ كَعِلْمِي بِدُنْيَاكُمْ هَذِهِ.. السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَ الْأَرْضِينَ فِي أَقَلِّ مِنْ طَرْفَةِ عَيْنٍ لَفَعَلْتُ».

"Al-Rida (PBUH) used to speak to people in their languages, and by God, he was the most eloquent of people and the most knowledgeable of every tongue and language... 'I am Allah's proof over His creation, and He would not take a proof over a people while not knowing their languages...'"

Faithful¹ and himself as possessors of *fasl al-khitab*. Based on the Quranic verse, the *fasl al-khitab* granted to Prophet David is from *ladunni* (divine direct) knowledge, and Imam al-Rida introduces himself as one of the emerging and novel instances of *fasl al-khitab*, which is an exegetical flow of the type of *ta'wil al-misdaq* (extending the apparent meaning of the verse from its primary instances to its hidden and novel instances, which, by rescinding the particularity of time, place, and persons, is applied to new individuals) (Masoudi, 2016, vol. 1, p. 68).

Fasl al-khitab means the separation of speech (Khwarazmi, 2007, p. 49). Al-Tarihi has defined *fasl al-khitab* as the resolution between two individuals, and has mentioned the meaning of knowledge of all languages by quoting the narration of Imam al-Rida (Al-Tarihi, 1996, vol. 2, p. 51). Therefore, in the narration of Imam al-Rida, *fasl al-khitab* is applied or interpreted as knowledge of languages.

Consequently, Imam al-Rida has created a semantic expansion for *fasl al-khitab* in the sense of knowledge of all languages, and has applied this Quranic term to himself, which is an instance of *jary ta'wili* (*jary ta'wili* means expanding the inner meaning of the verse and applying it to hidden and newly emerged individuals and instances) (Masoudi, 2016, vol. 1, p. 70). This is while most exegetes have considered *fasl al-khitab* to mean judgment based on the claimant's evidence and the defendant's oath (Muqatil, 2003, vol. 3, p. 139; Al-Farra, 1980, vol. 2, p. 401; Tabari, 1992, vol. 23, p. 89; Al-Jurjani, 2009, vol. 2, p. 522; Tusi, n.d., vol. 8, p. 550; Tabarsi, 1993, vol. 8, p. 732), which is in fact judgment itself, in accordance with verse 20 of Surah Sad.

Another point is that knowledge of all languages also includes the language of animals and other creatures, which God has recounted

1. Amir al-Mu'minin

in verses of Surah An-Naml, expressing the ability of His special servants in this regard. The narration of the "Deer's Guarantor" (Zamine Ahoo) and other narrations concerning the Noble Messenger and the other Imams attest to this and are well-known among the Shia. Therefore, the Imam's knowledge of all languages—from humans and animals to other creatures on Earth and other planets—does not seem unlikely, since the Imam is the proof over them and their guide toward God. Given that the foundation of theological discussions is reason, and narrations either corroborate or are merely used to express the details of a subject—along with the rule of tolerance in the proofs of recommended acts and the narrations of *Man Balagha* (Ghazanfari, 2017, pp. 177-179)—what comes to the human mind and is also confirmed by reason is that when some of the Infallible Imams speak of being God's proof over all of existence, and in narrations speak of the existence of beings outside the Earth, then the possibility that the Imams are also proofs over them does not seem unlikely.

Another narration indicating the existence of civilization on other planets and the responsibility of guiding them by the Imam is the narration of Imam Hasan, who states: "Indeed, God has two cities, one in the East and the other in the West, both of which have an iron wall, and each city has a thousand thousand doors of gold, and within them are seventy thousand languages, every language contrary to the other. I am knowledgeable of all the languages between them and within them, and there is no proof in those two cities other than me and my brother Hussein"¹ (Al-Kulayni, 1986, vol. 1, p. 462; Al-Rawandi, 1989, vol. 2, p. 753;

١. «إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَدِينَتَيْنِ إِحْدَاهُمَا بِالْمَشْرِقِ وَالْأُخْرَى بِالْمَغْرِبِ عَلَيْهِمَا سُورٌ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ.. وَ مَا فِيهِمَا وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَ مَا عَلَيْهِمَا حُجَّةٌ غَيْرِي وَ غَيْرُ أَخِي الْحُسَيْنِ».

"Indeed, Allah has two cities, one in the East and the other in the West, with a wall of iron upon them... and there is no proof in them, between them, and upon them except me and my brother Hussein."

Majlisi, 1983, vol. 26, p. 192; Bahrani Isfahani, 1993, vol. 20, p. 360; Al-Bahrani, 1994, vol. 1, p. 110; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 11, p. 458).

His Eminence expresses matters through allegory to demonstrate the existence of different languages in various locations, and it is not specified whether the inhabitants of these places are on Earth or in the heavens; the matter is expressed in a general and comprehensive manner. As Allameh, paying attention to the verse «رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ» "Lord of the East and the West" (Al-Muzzammil: 9), has stated, this phrase of the verse means the Lord of the entire universe, because the East and the West are two relative directions that encompass the entire visible world (Tabatabai, 1995, vol. 20, p. 102).

God placed the ability to create various languages within humans, and people of every tribe and nation anywhere in the world brought about different languages. These diverse languages are not limited to our planet Earth; rather, on other planets, there are beings each of whom speaks in their own languages, just as some contemporary researchers have considered this narration adaptable to the existence of societies and civilizations beyond the known human environment (Rezaei, 2014, p. 239), even though the direct indication of the narration on such instances may not be definitive.

In this case, apart from informing of the existence of rational and intellectual beings like humans with differing languages among them, the Imam also emphasizes their being the proof and Imam over them. This is because being God's proof has certain signs, among which are knowing the language of every person, group, city, country, and even every sphere and planet with which the Imam must communicate, guide them, and answer their questions. Therefore, knowing their language and dialect is one of the conditions for being a proof, Imam, and leader.

Imam Hasan introduces himself and his brother as knowledgeable of all those languages. We know that this is nothing

other than divine grace bestowed upon them. Therefore, His Eminence likens the various languages of different nations and planets to two cities in the East and the West, expressing the matter through allegory. Afterward, he states instances of divine effusion, namely the divine proofs. What is evident from this narration is that this knowledge is not restricted to a specific Imam, but rather encompasses all the Imams, including the Imam of the Age (may Allah hasten his reappearance), who holds an even broader responsibility.

Another narration, similar to the previous one, has been recorded from Imam Sadiq which serves as confirmation of it, stating: "Indeed, Allah created two cities—one in the West and the other in the East—each populated by seventy thousand people. They have walls of iron, and each city has one million doors of gold, with each door having two leaves. These seventy thousand people speak various dialects, and I know all their dialects. In those two cities, there is no proof except me, my fathers, and my sons after me" ¹ (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 47, p. 119; Bahrani Isfahani, 1993, vol. 20, p. 360; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 11, p. 458).

This narration also points allegorically to various languages and dialects whose precise location is not explicitly specified, yet it states the instances of those who possess all these languages. Since acquiring a language other than one's mother tongue requires teaching and learning, mastering all languages and dialects demands a science beyond natural knowledge. Therefore, it must be through divine grace and *ladunni* (direct divine) knowledge, indicating that their possessors are God's proofs and signs of the Exalted Creator.

١. « قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ مَدِينَتَيْنِ... وَأَنَا أَعْرِفُ جَمِيعَ تِلْكَ اللُّغَاتِ وَ مَا فِيهَا وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا حُجَّةٌ غَيْرِي وَ غَيْرَ آبَائِي وَ غَيْرِ أَبْنَائِي بَعْدِي. »

"He said: 'Indeed, Allah created two cities... and I know all those languages, and there is no proof in what is within them and between them except me, my fathers, and my sons after me.'"

Among the traditions that illustrate the Imam's knowledge, mastery, and consequently his status as the proof, are the narrations of his debates. Imam al-Rida has seven famous debates with scholars of various religions, the most renowned of which are the debates with the Christian Catholicos (*Jathaliq*) and the Jewish Exilarch (*Ras al-Jalut*), which took place in one of the grand assemblies of al-Ma'mun. Nawfali stated that al-Ma'mun wanted to test the Imam's knowledge, and thus invited all scholars from other religions. In response to Nawfali's anxiety, Imam al-Rida stated: "When you hear my arguments against the people of the Torah using their Torah, and against the people of the Gospel using their Gospel, and against the people of the Psalms using their Psalms, and against the Sabians in their Hebrew language, and against the Magian mobeds in their Persian language, and against the Romans in the Roman language, and against the followers of various schools in their own languages—yes, when I invalidate the proof of each group individually such that they abandon their school of thought and accept my words, then al-Ma'mun will realize that he is not deserving of the position he is seeking! At that time, he will regret it.

The assembly was convened, and it turned out precisely as the Imam had stated. There, he presented the words of John of Daylam—endorsed by two scholars from the Jews and the Christians—stating that Jesus the Messiah, in the third book of the Gospel, foretold the advent of Muhammad, the Ahl al-Bayt, and his community, a meaning which the Glorious Quran also quotes from Jesus in verse 6 of Surah As-Saff (Sobhani, 1982, pp. 97-133). There, the Imam spoke about the Gospel, the loss of the original Gospel, and its authorship by four individuals: Mark, Luke, John, and Matthew, pointing out the contradictions in the Catholicos's words and leaving him helpless (Pishva'i, 2007, p. 526). Through these debates, Imam al-Rida demonstrated his knowledge, awareness, power, and capability over all those present and various

religions, thereby reminding them of his authority (hujiyyah) over all of them and their respective faiths.

Imam Sajjad, in interpreting verse 65 of Surah Al-Hajj, states: "We are the Imams of the Muslims, the proofs of God over all the worlds, the masters of the believers, the leaders of the bright-faced ones, and the masters of the people of faith; we are the cause of security for the inhabitants of the earth, just as the stars are the cause of security for the inhabitants of the heavens; we are those through whom God holds the sky so that it does not fall upon the earth except by His permission, and we are those through whom God holds the earth so that it does not shake its inhabitants"¹ (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 23, p. 5; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 9, p. 716).

The overall conclusion of these narrations is that, from the perspective of Imami theology, the Imams possess a knowledge that transcends acquired learning, are cognizant of languages, and are introduced as divine proofs over expansive realms of the universe. The narration of the two cities speaks of the Imam's authority over unknown communities with diverse languages, even though the terrestrial or extraterrestrial nature of those communities is not explicitly stated. Furthermore, the narration of Imam Sajjad with the expression "the proofs of God over all the worlds" reinforces the comprehensive scope of this discussion.

Therefore, this collection of narrations can serve as corroboration for the possibility that the Imam's knowledge and authority encompass realms and beings beyond known human society. Consequently, the Infallible Imams, حجج الله على العالمين, each in their own time, were God's proofs on Earth and beyond, aware of humans, jinn, and other rational

١. «نَحْنُ أَيْمَةُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَحُجَجُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ...».

"We are the Imams of the Muslims and the proofs of God over the worlds..."

and non-rational beings, and—due to the responsibility of the Imamate and guidance—were in communication with them. A fortiori, the Promised Mahdi, the Proof of God (may Allah hasten his reappearance), also bears this momentous responsibility.

3. Al-Mahdi(PBUH), the Proof of God

Since the Prophet is the Seal of the Prophets (Al-Ahzab: 40) and no prophet will come after him, he has twelve successors, the last of whom is the Promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance). He is an Imam sharing the Prophet's name, possessing characteristics like his, and having capabilities identical to those of his fathers. The existence and responsibility of the Savior of the world have been articulated in traditions, including the narration of the Noble Messenger on the night of the Mi'raj, where God, after naming the twelve Imams and showing them in a halo of light to him while they were standing in prayer, with Al-Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) shining among them like a radiant star, stated: "O Muhammad, these are My proofs, and the Qa'im is from your lineage and progeny. By My majesty and glory! He is the proof whom My friends are obligated to follow, and he is the avenger against My enemies. Through them, God holds the heavens so that they do not fall upon the earth except by His permission" (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 27, p. 199; Barazesh, 2015, vol. 9, p. 716). Numerous traditions from the Noble Messenger, the Imams, and even other religions have stated the Imamate of the Promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) through various expressions and await his reappearance, and in some traditions, remarks have also been made directly and indirectly regarding the scope of his Imamate.

Governing a country as vast as the entire world is a difficult task that is only possible by enjoying divine leadership, compassionate and committed agents who believe in the divine system and the sovereignty

of Islam—especially under conditions where the world has inherited a multitude of disorders, including oppression, tyranny, and injustice, and some cities have been turned into ruins as a result of war and combat, accompanied by environmental pollution, successive droughts, and subsequent shortages of provisions and food supplies.

Despite all the afflictions and miseries that have entrapped humanity and mankind, a time will ultimately arrive when justice and equity are implemented on the earth—dead from oppression and injustice—by the capable hand of the divine man and peerless dispenser of justice through the will and decree of God. As Imam Sadiq stated in the commentary of the verse, «وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا» *"And know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death"* (Al-Hadid: 17): «العدل بعد الجور» "Justice after injustice" (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 72, p. 353; Al-Huwayzi, 1994, vol. 5, p. 243); and in another narration, he states: "God revives the earth through the Qa'im, meaning when it had died through the disbelief of its people" (Al-Huwayzi, 1994, vol. 5, p. 242). His Eminence will act with justice and revive the earth by spreading justice after it had died due to the spread of tyranny. He also stated:

"When our Qa'im rises... the wave of his justice and equity will penetrate into their houses and rooms, just as cold and heat enter them" (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 52, p. 362). Although the initial focus of these traditions is on reforming earthly affairs, given the theological foundations of the necessity of the Proof and the intermediary of grace, this dissemination of justice is not necessarily restricted to planet Earth and can encompass all realms under the governance of the Imam.

His Eminence, the Proof, possesses an exceedingly high spiritual perfection and continues to ascend in perfection. Despite having lived for approximately 1200 years, by benefiting from divine power to preserve his physical capabilities over time, he does not suffer from senility. As stated, the Prophet and the Imams, due to their

Imamate, have dominance over all the heavens and are aware of their creatures and galaxies, and 1400 years ago, according to traditions, they spoke of these creatures and their habitation in galactic spheres, expressing a discourse far broader than what the scientists of that time stated. A fortiori, this compassionate End-of-Time Imam (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is also aware of all of them, and considering the scope of the Imam's knowledge and authority, the plausibility of His Eminence's communication with rational beings in other realms can be raised; although proving the actual occurrence of such communication requires clearer texts.

According to incoming traditions, all sciences are with him, for a human being with his capabilities—if knowledge consists of twenty-seven parts, and until the time of his reappearance only two parts thereof have been uncovered for mankind by the prophets—when he comes, he will unfold the remaining sciences for human beings, and they will utilize them (Majlisi, 1983, vol. 52, p. 336). This colossal transformation in sciences does not merely mean technological advancement, but rather encompasses spiritual, moral, and cosmological sciences, as well as the various dimensions of existence. The Pole of the Universe of Possibility (may Allah hasten his reappearance), as the manifestation of the divine names, is the intermediary of grace throughout all existence. His Eminence (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is the intermediary for the flow of life and the order of the heavens and the earth, because the universe of possibility cannot receive the grace of existence from God without an intermediary and the Proof of God.

The Imam ((PBUH)), with his infallible leadership, lofty spirit, scientific and spiritual perfections, and immense moral virtues, monitors all events and currents of the earth and beyond, and all its points are as manifest to him as the palm of his hand. With the

knowledge and science that God has bestowed upon him, and with his peerless management and administration, he will not only have apparent dominance and sovereignty over the world and its people, but he will also rule over hearts, as narrated from the Messenger of God who said: "I give you the glad tidings of a man from Quraysh whose caliphate and rule the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth are pleased with" (Ibn Tawus, n.d., p. 70). Abdullah ibn Umar says: "A man from the descendants of Hussein will emerge from the direction of the East such that if the mountains confront him (to obstruct him), he will level them and make them his path," and he says: "Al-Mahdi is the one behind whom Jesus son of Mary will descend and pray" (Ibn Tawus, *ibid.*).

He will speak with all strata of people, wherever they may be in the world—whether on Earth, in the heavens, or on other planets—in their own languages. Therefore, by God's permission, no one will experience any difficulty in communicating with this capable Imam. Thus, he is the most knowledgeable human being on Earth, who is alive right now and in communication with all people, yet they do not recognize him, and this unfamiliarity is solely for the preservation of his life¹.

Therefore, the Mahdi whom the Jews, Christians, and even the Ahl al-Sunnah are awaiting is the Mahdi, the Master of the Command, from the lineage of the Noble Messenger and Imam Hussein, who has no enmity with anyone and is not pursuing power. He carries a momentous responsibility placed upon his shoulders by God: to rescue the entire universe (Earth and beyond) from bloodshed and discord, to bring it under the command of God, to establish peace so that all divine

1. As the divine scholar Ayatollah Bahjat used to state: "That Eminence is veiled from the eyes of the oppressors, but those who are neither oppressors, nor companions of the oppressors, nor associates with oppressors... are not veiled from his noble presence" (Hazrat-e Hujjat: Collection of Statements by Mr. Bahjat, p. 56).

creatures may live in security and tranquility, to benefit from divine bounties, and to know and praise their Lord.

Thus, he is the Proof of God over all religions and terrestrial and extraterrestrial creatures, bringing everyone under a complete religion that God approves of. As stated, like his fathers, he is more knowledgeable of all the books of the People of the Book than they are themselves, for he is the Proof of God and the vicegerent of God on Earth with a compassionate heart, and he can easily prove his authority, just as his fathers and the Noble Messenger were likewise.

Conclusion

The existence of extraterrestrial beings in other spheres, some of whom are endowed with intellect, cannot be overlooked, as it has been indicated in many verses and traditions. Therefore:

1. The existence of verses that use terms such as *dabbah* (creature) or the pronoun *man* (who/those) for the inhabitants of the heavens.
2. The expression of extraterrestrial traditions by the Infallibles, confirming the heavenly realms and asserting themselves as divine proofs over all existing beings in the universe, both terrestrial and celestial.
3. The various disputations of the Imams with the People of the Book—both Jews and Christians—using their own scriptures, showing that the Infallibles, while believing in all prophets, were also cognizant of their scriptures and the content of their esoteric teachings.
4. Traditions that cite knowledge of all the languages of the universe as evidence of the capacity to communicate with all morally responsible creatures of God in the earth and the heavens.

5. Traditions in which the Imam, through the proofs he presents, establishes his leadership over God's creatures in the earth and the heavens, designating himself as the Proof of God.
6. Traditions that declare the Savior of the world to be the Promised Mahdi, the final Imam, and the Proof of God.

All of these collectively indicate that Al-Mahdi, the Master of the Age (may Allah hasten his reappearance), is the final Imam chosen by God for the guidance of humanity, and this leadership is not restricted solely to terrestrial creatures; rather, it encompasses every morally responsible being residing in celestial spheres who is in need of divine guidance.

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