

## (Birth of Imam Al-Mahdi (A.j

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So much has been mentioned in Islamic sources about the status and rank of anticipators (Muntadhir) of the return of Imam Mahdi (PBUH) that it leads one to wonder how a simple act of awaiting has been given so much value. However, by focusing on the philosophy behind "awaiting (Intidhar) the return of Imam Mahdi (PBUH)" and the responsibilities of his anticipators, one may to some extent understand the value of this act:

1. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HP) said: "The best of worship is to anticipate the relief (Faraj) (return of Mahdi (PBUH))."1
2. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HP) said: "The best struggle (Jihad) of my community is to await the Faraj."2
3. Amir al-Mu'minin (PBUH) said: "Await the Faraj and do not be hopeless of Allah's mercy; indeed Allah, the Lord of might and glory considers the best of acts to be the anticipation of Faraj"3
4. Sheikh Sadooq has narrated in his book, al-Khisal, from Imam Sadiq (PBUH) who narrated from his ancestors: "The rank of those who await the return of Mahdi is equal to the rank of those whom shed blood in the way of Allah."4
5. Also in Kamal al-Din Imam Sadiq (PBUH) explains the importance of anticipation (Intidhar): "Blessed are those followers of our Ariser (Qa'eim) who await the last Imam during his occultation and are obedient after his reappearance; they are the close ones to Allah; no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve."5

The above narrations gave a glimpse of the importance of Intidhar, however in the following passages we will slightly explain why anticipating the Faraj is so important:

1- Intidhar is the connection between Imam Mahdi (PBUH) and his followers: As you may know, "Wilayat" and "Imamat" are essential beliefs of the Shia. In fact the belief in the presence of Allah's representative and an Infallible Imam in all ages and at all times is one of the most important aspects of this school of thought.

In other words, obeying the Imam of the era and representative of Allah is necessary for the acceptance of all worships and deeds. Of course Intidhar must be used its correct context: to be hopeful to the return of 12th Infallible Imam from the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HP). It is he who is the representative of Allah in this age; and is the gate for Allah's blessing to people, witness to the acts of his followers, and the helper of them in difficulties

and hardships.

2- Awaiting the return of Imam Mahdi (PBUH), the criterion that determines the value of humans: The goals of humans can to a great extent determine their intellectual growth in society. Just as the famous saying which says, "Speak up about your dreams so that I tell you who you are," wise goals and dreams talk a great deal about the excellence of humans who choose them. Conversely having low wishes and dreams shows of the low character in that human. Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam Ali (PBUH) has said in this regard, "The worth of a man is according to his courage."<sup>6</sup>

After this short introduction, it can be said that since a true Muntadhir (one whom awaits the return of Imam Mahdi (PBUH)) has valuable goals and dreams, then similarly he himself has the best and highest virtues. The final dream of this Muntadhir is for the true and peaceful religion of Allah (SWT) to govern the world, the destruction of all oppressors, and to see justice and safety put into practice for everyone.

3- Intidhar keeps individuals dynamic and hopeful: During the occultation era, Intidhar has a critical effect in terms of individual and social improvements. If those who await Imam Mahdi (PBUH) do their responsibilities and practice Islam as they should, they will reach a high status in humanity. In other words, a Muntadhir by fulfilling all requirements expected of him, reaches .that highest degree of perfection

*Reference: Mu'ood monthly magazine, #28; certain changes have been made))*

*Roshd Website congratulates all on this auspicious occasion, 15th of Sha'ban, rebirth of justice and unending blessing upon the world: the birth of the savior, Allah's present deputy on earth .(Imam Hujjat Ibn al-Hassan al-Askari (PBUH*