



## Investigating the Destiny of Children in the Hereafter from Avicenna, Mullā Ṣadrā, and the Infallibles' Viewpoints

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### **Abstract**

The destiny of the human being in the hereafter is one of the issues that one can never be indifferent about it. That human beings will ultimately be divided into the good and the bad, and rewarded or punished is unanimously agreed upon by all the Muslim thinkers. However, there is ample disagreements regarding how the children or those who die before the age of puberty would be rewarded or punished. By investigating Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā's viewpoints and studying the Infallibles' narratives, the present library-based study attempted to answer the following question: what is the destiny of children and the status of their souls after dissociating from body in the hereafter. The findings showed that although there are some disagreements on this regard among the three, they unanimously agree that punishing children without the Divine test is against the Divine justice; because of the Divine mercy and the children's not reaching to the age of puberty, as well as the rule which stipulates no punishment without declaration of law, there will be no punishment for the children. Children will be subject to the Divine mercy and, according to some narrative, they will join their faithful parents. Moreover, according to some other narratives, they will be trained by Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH), Ibrāhīm and Sara, and become the servants of the people of the paradise. All of the above are consistent with the narratives on the Divine knowledge about the children. Finally, from Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā's viewpoints, there is no intellectual impediment.

**Keywords:** *The Destiny of the Children; Resurrection; Medial; Hereafter; Avicenna and Ṣadr Al-Muta'allihīn*

### **Introduction**

The destiny of the human being in the hereafter has always been important, yet ambiguous. Inefficiency of the intellect and experience as well as other means of attaining knowledge on the details of

the hereafter has added to this ambiguity. In Islam, accepting the existence of the other world and the reward and punishment of the human being is one of the fundamental principles; however, there are various and conflicting views on the quality and conditions and the manner in which the reward and punishment are received.

Since the human being's intellect is not able to understand the instances and details of the otherworldly affairs, the most significant way to understand the truth of the hereafter is to refer to the Qur'ānic verses and narratives to find answers to the questions and clarify the doubt on the issue.

One of the topics to be studied in eschatology is the destiny of human beings after death. Ample papers have been written on this issue (e.g. Khāmenehī, 1427/2006; Raḥīmpūr, & zāri', 1434/2013; Sheikh al-Islāmī, 1434/2013).

The present writing attempted to comparatively study the destiny of the children after death in the works of Avicenna, the pioneer of the Mashā' philosophy, and **Mullā Ṣadrā** (also called Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī and Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn), the founder of the school of Transcendent wisdom), and based on the enlightening words of the infallibles (PBUH) and find answers to the following questions: what is the destiny of children regarding the reward and punishment in the hereafter? Based on which criteria will the Almighty God treat them? Will they be treated according to their fathers' religions?

The data were collected through library research and the research method was descriptive-analytical in nature and based on the intellectual and narrative data.

In this study, by children we mean its religious and jurisprudential meaning, i.e. those who have died before reaching to the age at which one becomes religious duty bound. In Islam, the religious puberty age for boys and girls is determined based on the physical manifestations, which is 9 lunar years for the girls and 15 lunar years for the boys.

### *Identity and Existential Dimensions of the Human Being*

According to his essence and nature, human being has always sought to understand and know the nature, creatures and different affairs. Most particularly, knowing himself, i.e. human being, has been the most important, albeit the most complicated, things for him such that it can be said that to understand any school and tradition, we should focus on its attitude towards human beings. Studying the existential dimensions of the human being is of great importance to the thinkers so that it has led to the emergence of various sciences such as anthropology and self-knowledge.

Among the fundamental questions about the human being are the followings: is the human being merely made of this material body? Or is there another aspect called the soul or spirit? And on the resurrection day and the regression of the human being, is it his body or soul that is rewarded or punished? Or will both his body and soul be rewarded or punished?

According to the intellectual and narrative teachings of Islam, the essence and identity of the human being is a combination of the body and the spirit, and beyond the material dimension of him, there is a non-material and transcendental dimension which has non-material identity and affects and is considered as the main dimension of the existence of the human being. Accordingly, man is a being who is made up of two essences of soul and body.

## ***The world and Hereafter***

### *The World, Medial, and Hereafter*

Undoubtedly, the "life" of human being is not restricted to the material life and to this world, rather "life" has various degrees and stages, existing one stage is considered as "death" and entering the next stage is viewed as "life" and "rebirth". The holy Qur'ān presents the death as one of the stages of the life cycle and stipulates the same mystical and philosophical issue in several verses, for instance: "*How can you be unfaithful to Allah, [seeing that] you were lifeless and He gave you life, then He will make you die, and then He shall bring you to life, and then you will be brought back to Him?*" (2:28).

Moreover, according to Islamic doctrine, there is another world beyond the material world which is called the medial, as it is specified in verse "*And ahead of them is a barrier until the day they will be resurrected*" (23:100). It begins with death and ends in resurrection. Therefore, whoever dies enters the medial world (Ibn Manzūr, 1414/1994, vol. 3, 7). The dead have a specific kind of life in the medial world. The narratives on the specific prayer at the night of the burial, pilgrimage the dead, doing good deeds and paying charities for them and the fact that they sometimes spiritually visit their homes and get accustomed to their pilgrims and get horrified after their departure are related to the medial world.

Although there are many disagreements on the nature of the medial world, most of the thinkers believe that there is a barrier between the material world and the intellect world which is called imaginal world (*mundus imaginalis*), "sometimes imaginal world is referred to as great imagination and the imaginal forms as small imaginations" (Ḥuseinī Tehrānī, 1407/1987, vol. 3, 27). Mullā Ṣadrā states: "according to the rational reasoning and narratives and traditions quoted from the Infallibles, there is a world between the material world and the metaphysical world which is named the medial or imaginal world" (Āshfānī, 1423/2002, 135).

### *The Nature and Meaning of Death*

Death means to die, loss of body strength and the instinctual ardency, annihilation of life, disappearance of the existence, demise (Dehkhudā, 1365/1946). Death is the permanent dissociation of the spirit or the soul from body, which naturally and gradually disrupts the natural system of the body.

The founder of the transcendent wisdom has presented a new definition of the death; rejecting the ideas of the biologists and some of the physicians- who consider the death as the result of the decay of the body- referring to two kinds of death, i.e., natural and sudden, he states that death is the spirit's abandonment of the body to perfect oneself and independence from the body. In philosophical explanation of this, he says: "soul, at first, is a matter, i.e., body, but after growth and evolution of the body, it takes a different path of evolution, which is not stopped when the body starts to grow old, that is, unlike body, it doesn't grow old, have entropy and is not destroyable (Khāmenehī, 1427/2006).

## ***Theoretical Basis of the Destiny of the Children after This World***

In this section, we attempt to discuss some of the theoretical basis of the destiny of the children after this world.

### *Immateriality of the human soul*

One of the major issues in philosophy is the relationship between soul and body which is comprehensively discussed under a relatively new scientific discipline called the "philosophy of mind".

Avicenna considers the souls to be eternal and, particularly, argues about the materiality of the imagination and illusion power (Avicenna, 1404/1984, 11-10). He also considers the incorruptibility as the criteria of the simplicity of the existence of the thing. Therefore, he doesn't accept this idea that souls die by the annihilation of the body and presents some reasons for it, including that "the cause of the human soul is an immaterial substance called intellect which is eternal. Accordingly, the human soul is eternal because of the eternality of its cause, since where there is a cause, it is not possible for the effect to disappear." (ibid, 105). Avicenna "has argued about the mortality of the animal soul since it was proved that all animal faculties act by using their body and physical aspect. The existence of the faculties in an animal is the very aspect of the action; therefore, animal faculties mean the existence of performing an action and the action aspect. In other words, they are bodily and, therefore, their existence is both bodily and related to body, thus, they don't survive after the body's annihilation (Raḥīmpūr and zāri', 1434/2013, 134).

In material stages, the coming-into-being and renewal takes place and when the body is corrupted, the human soul moves from the material stage to the complete immaterial stage. Accordingly, decadence of the body effects the material stage not the existence of the soul. Since the substantial motion is a pervasive one and includes all the human souls, the human souls survive after death, as Avicenna argues: "soul has eternal life after death" (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 168).

Mullā Ṣadrā states the human soul goes through several stages in its substantial motion; some stages occur in the material world and some in immaterial world. In material stages, coming-into-being and renewal take place, and when the body decays, in fact, the human soul moves from material stage to the complete immaterial stage. Since the substantial motion is a pervasive one and includes all the human souls, the human souls survive after death (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1401/1981a, vol. 9, 239-238).

Mullā Ṣadrā argues that the soul is a dynamic existence which moves through the material and immaterial stages to reach to transcendent stage, leaving the material stage behind. Thus, although the soul has material as well as medial and intellectual immateriality, it is possible to refer to body as the soul. This means the human soul moves from mineral form towards plant, then reaches animal medial immateriality. Continuing its evolution, the soul reached to a stage where its perfection is not physical or material, rather immaterial and spiritual.

Moreover, Mullā Ṣadrā explains the stages of the perfection of the soul based on the stages of the existence. For him, existence has three stages or three existential worlds which are at the length of each other. The lowest world or existential stage, is the material or natural world, and the highest one is the immaterial or the intellectual world. Between these two worlds, there exist a medial world which is called imaginal world (*mundus imaginalis*) or the soul world. The soul is able to percept the different forms existing in each of the three fold worlds, and according to the stage of each world, enjoys different degrees of perception; therefore, the soul has three levels in terms of perception: "sensory, imaginary, and intellectual" (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1409/1989, vol. 9, ۱۹۴). Accordingly, the existence of the human being has two dimensions and the human moves in different stages and levels of his existence.

### *The Divine Justice*

One of the most important theoretical basics of the destiny of the children after this world is the Divine justice, which is completely rational and explainable. In Dehkhudā's dictionary, justice is defined as fairness and equity. This notion is used in different fields such as ethics, law, politics, philosophy, and economy. The Greeks were the first who attempted to define this notion, and others continued their way.

Justice is one the principles of the Islamic doctrine, ethics and behavior, particularly, in Shiite religion. It is as important as the Unity and prophecy. Shiite religion is referred to as the religion of justice

which indicates the importance of this principle and shows the fact that the system of the universe is based on the justice. In addition, according to the teachings of Islam, all the prophets have come to establish the justice and social justice (*Qist*).

Amīr al- mu'minīn (PBUH) considers the justice as a criterion and indicator to evaluate the politics (Tamīmī Āmudī, 1410/1990). This shows the importance of the justice dispensation.

Mullā Ṣadrā considers the justice as one of the three fold virtues which is crystallized in "the right path" and passed through the hell of the extremes of excess and deficiency (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1401/1981a, vol. 4, 117).

Justice is divided into generative (*Takwīnī*), legislative (*Tashrīfī*) and penal (*Jazā'ī*). In this article, justice means the penal or the Divine justice, i.e. the system of the Divine reward or punishment is based on the justice, which is one of the doctrines of the Shiite. The Just God has dispensed His justice all over the universe, and has invited the human beings to do justice and avoid oppression and injustice. This kind of justice should primarily exist in the human being himself, which is called individual justice.

### *Medial Immateriality and the Medial World (Imaginational World)*

Mullā Ṣadrā states:

The faculty of imagination which is also called *Muṣawira'*, is one of the soul faculties which issues, maintains, alters and combines the images. Imagination is a medial world between the complete immateriality (intellect) and complete materiality (sense), which results in the transition from one stage to a higher stage. Therefore, the faculty of imagination belongs to the world which is similar to this world in terms of the form. The faculty of imagination is not bound to the material world, which is the interface between the sense and the intellect (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1402/1982, 69).

By reasoning, Mullā Ṣadrā proves the faculty of imagination of the natural body and its union with the resurrected body in the medial world, and accordingly states: "so, all the human souls even the ignorant and the children survive after the death of the body. This is consistent with the Shari'a, the holy book and the *Sunnah* and is one of the requirements of the Ḥanīf religion" (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1401/1981a, 145). Therefore, both the human soul and the world after death are immaterial.

## ***The Destiny of the Children in the Hereafter***

### *The Destiny of the Children in the Hereafter in the Narratives*

Many valuable teachings about the destiny of the children in the hereafter can be found in the narrative sources and the Infallibles' lifestyle, which can be of help in answering the given question; they not only confirm the intellectual findings, but also shed light on many details which are beyond the intellect and the experience of the human being. A few examples are presented below:

- Kāfī in his book, *Bāb al-atfāl*, states that once Imam Abū Ja'far Bāqir (PBUH) was asked: "has the Messenger of the God been asked about how the children will be sent to the heaven or hell? Abū Ja'far said: yes, the Messenger of the God answered: "God knows the best what the children have done." Abū Ja'far said: "do you know what this means?" I said: "no". Abū Ja'far stated: "it means that God's providence will be applied to them (Kuleinī, 1407/1987, vol 3, 249).
- In another Ḥadīth quoted by Sahl Ibn zīyād, Abū Ja'far (PBUH) was asked about the children. He said that on the resurrection day,

"God will gather them, set a fire, and order them to step into it. Those who are happy according to the Divine knowledge, will step into the fire which turns cold and safe. Those who are miserable according to the Divine knowledge will refuse to do so. Therefore, God will order them to step into the fire of the hell. They will reply no writing and messenger was sent us by you and now you are sending us to the hell? God will say: you didn't obey my oral command; how could you obey my messenger?" (Kuleinī, 1407/1987, vol 3, 248).

In "*Man lā yaḥḍaruhu al-faqih*" by Ibn Bābawayh commonly known as shaykh Ṣadūq, in the chapter on *the situation of the children of the believers*, many Ḥadīths have been narrated in this regard:

- It is quoted from the prophet (PBUH): "when a believer's child dies, the crier cries in the heavens and the earth, then if the child's parents or any of them or his believing family members had died before, will welcome him, otherwise he will be under the custody of Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) (Ibn Bābawayh, 1413/1993, vol. 3, 490).
- Abdullāh bin Sinān says: "I asked Imām Ṣādiq (PBUH): "what is the decree of the polytheists' children who die before the age of the puberty?" he answered: "they are infidels; therefore, no ablution, shroud and Ṣalāt is needed. God knows the best what they have done, and now they are considered infidels"(Ibn Bābawayh, 1413/1993, vol. 3, 491).
- The Shiite's children will be trained by Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) (Qomī, 1404/1984, vol. 2, 332).
- Amīr al- mu'minīn (PBUH) say: "the children of the polytheists will be in the hell with their fathers and the children of the Muslims will be in the Paradise along with their fathers ((Ibn Bābawayh, 1413/1993, vol. 3, 491).
- Quoting the commentary of the Qur'ānic verses 56:15 from *al-majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-āyah*, Mullā Ṣadrā states that the prophet (PBUH) was asked about the children of the polytheists. He answered: "they will be the servants of the Elysian" (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1407/1987, vol. 7, 30).
- Nawādir Rāwandī quotes from Imām Kāẓim (PBUH) that once the messenger of God (PBUH) said: "indeed, the demised children ask for forgiveness for their parents in the heavens of the merciful God. Ibrāhīm will have the custody of them and Sara will trains them, and they will live in a mountain of musk, amber and saffron" (Jazāyerī, 1423/2002, 160).
- According some narratives, some of the trees in the Paradise have breasts, like the breasts of a cow, which the believers' children who have died in infancy breast feed using them until they grow up and are sent to their parents. What is common between these two kinds of narratives is that some of the children will be trained by Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) and some other will be under the custody of Ibrāhīm and Sara. It can be said that the children of the 'Alawīz of the descendants of the messenger of God (PBUH) will be trained by Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) and other children will be taken care of by Ibrāhīm and Sara (Jazāyerī, 1423/2002, 160).

It can be inferred from the above narratives that:

- a) In the hereafter, the Almighty God judges the children based on His previous knowledge.
- b) If one of the parents is a believer, the child will join him/her; otherwise, Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) will be on their custody
- c) The training of the children in the hereafter will be given to Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH).
- d) The children of the polytheists will be the servants of the believers in the paradise.
- e) Every child will join his believing or polytheistic parents.
- f) The task of training of the children will be given to Ibrāhīm and Sara.

The first category of the narratives that state the status of the children in the hereafter depends on the Divine knowledge does not conflict with other categories, since none of the other views are also based on the Divine knowledge.

The second group of the narratives state that the children will either join their believing parents or be trained by Ḥaḍrat Zahrā (PBUH) or Ibrāhīm and Sara. All these indicate that the children will be

treated with the Divine grace and mercy. This group of Ḥadīths are not consistent with the first group in which the children are treated based on the Divine knowledge. Accordingly, that the children of the polytheists will be the servants of the Elysian is also in accordance with the Divine grace and mercy. However, the other narratives express that the children will join their parents; this also can be based the Divine grace and mercy, i.e., the children do not suffer the Divine punishment and if any punishment, it will torment the polytheistic parents of these children; God wants their parents to be tormented no the children themselves.

### *The Destiny of the Children in the Hereafter from the Theologians' Viewpoints*

Regarding the destiny of the children in the hereafter, the theologians have different views. For instance, a group called *Akhnasiya'* believes that the children are either believers or infidels (Sajjādī, 1415/1994, vol. 11, 111). Tamāmiyah group states that "the children will not resurrect in the hereafter since the hereafter is the place of rewards and punishments (Sajjādī, 1415/1994, vol. 11, 584). The Azāriqa believe that the children of the polytheists will be along with their polytheistic fathers (Tahānawī, 1417/1996, vol. 1, 142). The Ajārīda also hold the same belief (Tahānawī, 1417/1996, vol. 2, 1164). Another group argues that the children of the believers, although not able to acknowledge the religion, would be considered as the followers of their parents' faith.

Ḥassan zādeh Āmulī states "it is said that to do justice and practically decide on the reward or punishment, the people of the *Fatarat*, children and the insane will be ordered to stand on uplands, then, the most virtuous of them will be selected as a prophet. The selected prophet will bring an allegorical fire to them and say: "I'm the messenger of God to you." Some acknowledge it, while others deny it. The messenger will say: "step into the fire. Those who comply will be rescued and enter the paradise; those who refuse and resist will be perished and sent to the hell (Ḥassan zādeh Āmulī, 1420/1999, 345).

### *The Destiny of the Children in the Hereafter from Avicenna's Viewpoint*

Avicenna argues that:

Just as the people are different in terms of the worldly ranks and the worldly pleasures, human souls will also have different grades of pleasure and pain. The complete and pure souls will enjoy eternal, indiscernible pleasures, while the imperfect and defiant souls will face the eternal, indescribable pains; besides, those complete souls who have problems will suffer a long-lasting torment (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 168).

Avicenna considers various states for the human souls after death, one of the categories is as follows:

- A. The Foremost Ones (or the forerunners) (those who are complete both in the knowledge and the practice)
- B. The People of the Right Hand:
  1. Those who are complete in the practice but not in the knowledge
  2. Those who are complete in the knowledge but not in practice
- C. People of the Left Hand (those who are incomplete both in the knowledge and the practice)

### **A. The Foremost Ones (or the forerunners) (those who are complete both in the knowledge and the practice)**

Those who have attained the perfection of the rational souls and the stage of piety, go to the intellect world and enjoy the highest pleasures after the separation of their souls from their bodies (Avicenna, 1404/1984, 140). These people live in an eternal and absolute happiness ever after their death (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 167).

### **B. The People of the Right Hand**

They are divided into two groups:

First, those who are complete in the practice but not in the knowledge; they will be away from the celestial for a while to purify their dark appearance resulted from the bad deeds in the worldly life (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 168).

Second, those who are complete in the knowledge but not in practice; they do not enjoy absolute happiness and suffer absolute adversity (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 168). Since the perfection of the soul is impossible without the bodily practice, after the separation from body, the soul is assigned to celestial body in order to go through the stages of perfection to be able to have a place in the hereafter. Avicenna believes that to imagine the sensual pleasures and pains, the human soul should be assigned to celestial body so that these bodies and objects help him to imagine (Avicenna, 1417/1996, 141). Accordingly, his intellectual faculty, which has not been activated before the separation of the soul from the body, can be activated. These souls that belong to the naive people and the children who have died at the material intellect stage have not reached the stage of the active intellect, and have not develop the talent related to the active intellect. These souls attain the immortality, like the complete souls, but through a different way and after reaching the active intellect station.

The scholars have conflicting ideas on the immortality of these souls. For example, Aristotle believes that the souls decay and perish after losing their interest in the body. However, Themistios argues that the souls survive after death. Avicenna holds with Themistios, and basing his words on Themistios' idea, writes: "after separating from the body, these souls are ready to accept primary rationality out of the Divine grace" (Avicenna, 1400/1980, 273).

### **C. People of the Left Hand (those who are incomplete both in the knowledge and the practice)**

According to Avicenna, this group of the souls are always tormented and their pain and suffering will never be interrupted and they will descent to the lowest stage (Avicenna, 1424/2003, 168-167).

Avicenna presents another categorization in this regard:

- A. Those who are aware and willing to attain the perfection of the rational souls:
  1. Those who have fulfilled their perfection
  2. Those who have not fulfilled their perfection:
- B. Those who are unaware and reluctant to attain the perfection of their rational souls

Mullā Ṣadrā says that Avicenna narrates that Alexander believed that the material rational souls will perish after death, while Themistios believed in their immortality .... Since the God's providence is pervasive, these souls qualify an imaginative and weak happiness, that's why it is said that the souls of the children stay between the paradise and the hell (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1402/1982, 244). Of course, Mullā Ṣadrā in *Mafātīh al-ghayb Ishrāq al-haftum* states a similar point about the imperfect and intermediate



souls and their happiness or suffering from philosopher's perspective. In *Majālis al-Saba'e*, he explicitly believes in the annihilation of the souls of the children, while elsewhere, he argues for the immortality of their souls after death and states:

The criterion for the immortality of the souls is the perception of the basics which is a very weak degree of perception. For those who are firmly grounded in philosophy, ecstasies of the hereafter are the perceptual and scientific ecstasy, the other type of ecstasy is not limited to the intellectual world, the resurrection of the most of the human souls is that of medial world, and the human being will not attain the intellectual perception, unless he perceives all the meanings, and his resurrection will not be complete unless he interacts with the immaterialities. The mere perception of the general affairs and the obvious concepts does not lead to the intellectual happiness. Moreover, the partial souls of the children are not able to perceive the basic affair as well (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1429/2008, 51).

### *The Destiny of the Children in the Hereafter from Mullā Ṣadrā's Viewpoint*

Unlike the difference Islamic sciences such as the theoretical mysticism, illumination philosophy, peripatetic philosophy, theology and Ḥadīth which are merely based on one of the sources of the Shari'at, the Book, Sunna, intellect or consensus, the main element of the transcendent wisdom is formulated using reasoning, mysticism, and Qur'ān, which adds to its universality and stability.

It was said that after proving the medial immateriality, Mullā Ṣadrā argues for the immortality of the all the human souls, even the ignorant and the children, after death, and considers this is consistent with the Shari'at, the Book and Sunna. He believes in the salvation of the majority and states that the majority of the humans will attain the salvation because of 1. Their Monotheistic nature, 2. The annihilation of the Rebels and the guilty, 3. The gradation in salvation, 4. Concomitance between the limitation of salvation and forbearance of the existence, 5. Dominance of mercy over anger, and 6. Excellence of breaking the promise (Ḥuseinī Shāhrūdī, et. al., 1434/2013).

Every Human being is incumbent to know or believe in it. If they are people of reason and ijtihād, they would do so based on their insight; if they are of weak intellect, like the ignorant or children, they would do so by copying and subsection. Accordingly, each group attains a kind of salvation. If they are people of reason and ijtihād and believe in the opposite, and refuse to do so, they will suffer a torment like the infidels (Ḥuseinī Ardakānī, 1417/1996, 35). Mullā Ṣadrā states "according to many narratives, children do not reach the degree of jubilation of the hereafter happiness; they do not gain independence in any houses of the paradise, nor are they given any *ḥūrīes* (i.e., beautiful virgins of the paradise); rather, they would serve the people of the paradise. The same holds true about the children of the infidels, since they have died before the age of puberty, thus, they have done no disobedience and cruelty (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1302/1885, 277).

Mullā Ṣadrā in the *ninth Ishrāq*, which is devoted to the imperfect and intermediate souls and the degrees of their happiness and suffering, discusses about the immortality of the simple souls and the quality of the happiness of the imperfect souls, such as the children. In addition, he challenges the view of Avicenna and others (who believed in the annihilation of the children's soul after the death of the body, while the immateriality of the imagination has been proved, and that every being that enter the animal stage, i.e. the being has a degree of the imaginational perception, it is eternal), and points out the happiness and suffering are not limited to the intellectual happiness and suffering. The immaterial and other worldly being have another stage which is called animal and medial immateriality and that most of the human souls have the same degree of existence (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1401/1981b, 47).

Understanding the states and ecstasies of the soul and spirit of the human being after death and the issues associated to the hereafter states of the soul is not possible without referring to the words of the receivers of the revelation. If the theoretical intellect by itself reaches to this understanding, the role of the scholars such as the Ishrāq (illuminationist philosophy) and Mashā' (peripatetic philosophy) in the discussion of the resurrection would not be so small. In addition, there would be no disagreements between the prophets and the scholars in this regard. Therefore, scholars have stated that the intellect is incapable of perceiving the basics issues related to the hereafter (Āshṭīānī, 1437/2016, 30).

According to Mullā Ṣadrā, a few of the human souls would be active on the intellect and intellectual and that most of the souls are the imperfect souls that have not been able to go beyond the potential state and attain the active intellect state (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1402/1982, 243).

The scholars have differing ideas about the immortality and annihilation of the souls. Mullā Ṣadrā argues that these disagreements are resulted from their disbelief in the soul stations, ecstasies and its worlds, and writes: there are three worlds and, on the other hand, ecstasies and the perceptual aspects have three degrees including sense, imagination and intellect. in accordance with the three worlds, Each of these perceptual degrees has a corresponding world; in that, the sensible world corresponds with the degree and station of the sense, the imaginational world corresponds with the imagination degree, and the world of immaterial and the intellectual separations is related to the intellect (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1403/1983, 552).

Therefore, the scholars' disbelief in the existence of a semi-immaterial world called the world of separated imagination or the medial world, is the basis and the cause of the disagreement between them (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1424/2003, 303).

In some of his writings, Mullā Ṣadrā explicitly differentiated the imperfect souls that have no knowledge and even are not due to do perfume the basic duties, like children, from the ignorant' souls, i.e., the humans who have only imagined the intellectual ruling, but are not interested in the theoretical truth (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1403/1983, 590). Accordingly, Mullā Ṣadrā makes the meanings of "the children souls between the paradise and the hell" and "most of the people of the paradise are the ignorant" clear. Mullā Ṣadrā declares that the spiritual suffering is not imposed to the animal souls, naive souls and the ignorant (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1401/1981b, 131).

Mullā Ṣadrā divides the human souls into four groups: a. pure knower, b. impure knower, c. pure ignorant, d. impure ignorant.

The rational souls that possess the Divine knowledge, whether they are impure or not, soon or late will join the intellectual world. The ignorant and the souls that are deprived of the Divine knowledge will also be deprived of the Divine lights. In addition, the impure ignorant will be deemed to annihilation (Ṣadr al-dīn Shīrāzī, 1424/2003, 300-302).

## **Conclusion**

The system of the creation is based on the reward and the punishment. Human beings will be rewarded or punished according to their deeds and status. There are imperfect souls who have died before the age of puberty; according to some narratives, in hereafter, this group will be tested and then rewarded or punished accordingly. However, other narratives state that these souls will live in a place which is neither the paradise nor the hell.

- Children have not refused the Truth, so punishing them without any testing is against the justice, intellect and narrative. On the other hand, children do not possess any knowledge needed to ascend to

the intellect and light world and the paradise. However, given the Divine grace and mercy, rewarding them is consistent with the intellect and the narrative.

- According to the narratives and Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā's viewpoints, connecting to the active intellect means the true perfection of the soul, and those human beings who have been able to abandon the material affairs will enjoy the pleasures and blessings of the paradise. On the other hand, the mischievous human beings who refuse the Truth will be in an eternal torment.
- Avicenna as well as some of the narratives state that God decides on the destiny of the souls of the children and the ignorant according His vast Divine mercy. Arguing that these souls belong to the celestial bodies and observing and imagining the heavenly attributes, Avicenna states that for the intermediate souls to attain the perfection and the paradise, they should suffer a temporary torment. Of course, this group will reach the true perfection and the Divine proximity.
- Mullā Ṣadrā also believes in imaginal world (mundus imaginalis) and explains the status of the imperfect souls in the imaginal world. He states that these souls, although are deprived of the general intellectual lights, will suffer the spiritual torment.

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