



The Scope of Imams' Knowledge from the Intellect and Narration Viewpoint

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Abstract

Knowledge of religion and Sharia rulings is the one in which Imams are the most knowledgeable: knowledge of Qur'an and its exegesis, knowledge of the doctrinal and theological issues, and knowledge of the unseen, which has been granted to Imam by Divine permission. Imam is also aware of past and future events. Knowledge of the deaths and disasters is also in the scope of Imams' knowledge. Imam also knows about the knowledge of the prophets and angels and mankind's inner state. Imam is able to speak with everyone in his/her language. He knows what is happening in the heavens and the earth. He masters politics and governing methods and is the most knowledgeable person of his time since without knowing politics, it is not possible to govern. The present descriptive-analytical study aims to investigate and determine the scope of Imams' knowledge the intellect and narration viewpoint. It can be concluded the Imam is considered the most knowledgeable person of his time in all areas. He is aware of all the specific and general affairs, even the unseen. Using this extensive knowledge and with Divine permission, he attempts to explain the truth of Islam. He governs using science-based politics and leads the world of Islam in line with the Divine goals of Islam.

Keywords: *Imams' Knowledge; Scope of Imams' Knowledge; Sources of Religion*

Introduction

One of the important topics of Shi'a theology is Imams' (AS.) knowledge. This has several aspects the clarification of which will strengthen and develop *Imamiah* theology. One important and must-studied aspect of Imams' (AS.) knowledge is the scope of their knowledge:

- What is the scope of Imams' (AS.) knowledge?
- Which affairs is Imam aware of?
- Is Imam aware of the death and disasters? How does Imam acquire the knowledge of the past and future?
- Does Imam know different languages or just his mother tongue?

- What is Imams' (AS.) knowledge of Qur'an like?
- Is knowledge of the past prophets and angels' knowledge in the scope of the Imams' (AS.) knowledge?
- How does Imam know what is happening in the heavens and the earth?
- Is knowledge of mankind's inner state in the scope of Imams' (AS.) knowledge?

In studying the scope of Imams' (AS.) knowledge, these questions must be answered. The present study aims to investigate the scope of Imams' (AS.) knowledge and answer the above questions by examining the narrations and the opinions of the theologians.

Review of the Literature

Being "knowledgeable" is one of the essential and main characteristics of the Imam and is a key debate among theologians, particularly Shia theologians. In some cases, the way to know Imam is to examine his knowledge. Accordingly, it has long been an important topic in theology. There are ample books and articles about it. Kouh Kamare'ie (1976) discusses *Dala'il al-wilayah*, and the sainthood and the knowledge of the Imam in detail. Muzafar (2010) discusses this issue in three parts. To prove Imams' Presential Knowledge, he uses narrative and intellectual evidence. Farzi Pourian's article entitled "The scope of Imams' knowledge" focuses on the scope of Imams' knowledge and discusses if Imam needs to be knowledgeable about religious issues, or non-religious issues, as well. Shakir (2012) discusses some sources of Imams' knowledge and presents narrative and Qur'anic evidence to prove them. Furthermore, Al-e Hashim investigates the scope of Imams' knowledge, whether it is absolute and unlimited or limited, requiring training.

Rostami and Al-e Bouyeh (2009) examine the differences between Imams' knowledge and the knowledge of other people. They also discuss the miraculous nature of Imams' knowledge and whether it is acquired or Presential. To do so, they rely on narrative, mystical, philosophical, and theological Qur'anic approaches.

The present study attempts to discuss the scope of Imams' knowledge based on narration and intellect. In addition, Islamic scholars' opinions are also examined.

Imams' (AS.) Knowledge

By Imams' knowledge, it does not mean the superficial knowledge acquired by all people rather it is the innate knowledge that is granted to Imam through the angels, Qur'an, hadith, etc. The theologians present several definitions for Imams' knowledge some of which are as follows:

According to Mu'tazili scholar, Gazi Abd al-Jabbar, "Imam must know whatever is required by his Imamatus and is necessary to fulfill his duties" (Rabbani Gulpaigani, 2014, p. 180).

The Ash'ari theologian, Baqilani also states "Imams' knowledge must be to the extent that is needed for a judge. He further adds another condition for Imams' knowledge is to have enough knowledge about war, commending the army, and guarding Islam and the Islamic nation" (Baqilani, 1993, p. 141).

Matrudi scholars also discussed this. Abu Hafs nasafi argues one condition of being Imam is that he must be able to enforce Islamic laws, protect the boundaries of Islam, and takes the oppressed revenge from the cruel" (Taftazani, 1967, p. 114).

In his treatise on Imamatus, Muhaqiq Tusi considers knowledge as the second attribute of Imam, saying, "The second essential attribute of the Imam is his knowledge of the things knowledge of which is necessary for his Imamatus, including knowledge of Shari'a rulings, political methods, management, fighting against enemies. Without such knowledge, he cannot fulfill his Imamatus" (Tusi, 1984, p. 430).

Imams' knowledge is not just the one that can be gained using senses and acquired skills. Imam also acquires some knowledge through senses and acquired skills. Therefore, there is no doubt in Imams' externally acquired knowledge; rather the arguments are on the quantity and quality of his innate knowledge which is obtained through revelation, inspiration or the Holy Spirit or the like, which are granted to the prophets and guardians through special means"(Al-Najafi al-lari, 1997, p. 2).

Hisham ibn al-Hakam states that "if Imam is not knowledgeable, he may change that Shari'a and rulings of Islam" (Shaykh Saduq, 2006, v. 1, p. 240). That is, Imam must be the most knowledgeable person and know the rulings and *Shari'a*.

Shaykh Mufid also argues that "Imams' knowledge, like human knowledge, is within the scope of externals. However, he obtains inner knowledge about the unseen thought teachings of God, either by means of the prophets or sincere dreams or other ways" (1993, p. 77).

Sayyid Murtaza states that it is *Wajib* (obligatory) for Imam to be aware of the politics related to his order and command and also of the religious issues and the Islamic laws and rulings" (2001, p. 180).

The Scope of Imams' Knowledge Based on the Narrations

One important discussion regarding Imams' knowledge is the scope of his knowledge. What area does Imam have knowledge about? Is Imams' knowledge limited to Shari'a rulings, or does it cover non-religious and non-Shari'a issues, as well?

Knowledge of Religion and Shari'a Rulings

There are ample narrations about Imams' knowledge of religion and religious sciences. Some consider Imams "the heirs of the Holy prophet's knowledge" (Tabarsi, 2007, v. 1, p. 271) and "the sources of knowledge, *fiqh*, and *Sunnah*" (Tabari, 1997, 231). Some believe that they are the most knowledgeable in Qur'an and *Sunnah* and the most sagacious to answer any question (Ibn Tawous, 1990, p. 111).

Since the Holy prophet is the most knowledgeable person on religion and religious rulings and Imams are considered the heirs of his knowledge, they know the religion and religious rulings. Thus, Imams' knowledge includes religious rulings.

Some narrations consider Imams the source of knowledge, *fiqh*, and *Sunnah*. This indicates that Imam is the most knowledgeable person on *fiqh* and *Sunnah*. Accordingly, Imams' knowledge includes *fiqh* and *Sunnah*.

Moreover, some other narrations view Imam as the most knowledgeable and the most sagacious one. According to these narrations, Imam is the most knowledgeable person in religious rulings and Qur'an.

Hisham ibn al-Hakam states once he asked Imam Sadiq (AS.) "Regarding the halal (religiously-lawful) and haram (religiously-unlawful) and Qur'an, I know you are the most knowledgeable people in them" (Saffar, 1983, p. 3) if he is not knowledgeable, he may change the Shari'a and rulings of Islam. For example, he may amputate the thief's hand while *hadd* should be enforced on him, and vice versa". Further, he adds the following verse: "... Is He who guides to the truth worthier to be followed, or he who is not guided unless shown the way? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?" (Yunus: 35) (Saduq, 2006, V. 1, p. 240). Therefore, Imam must be the most knowledgeable to distinguish between the halal and haram, enforce the religious rulings and prevent them from any distortion and implement the divine rulings correctly and completely. Where *hadd* is necessary and when it is essential to take revenge, he must act accordingly. If he is not knowledgeable, he may change the divine rulings and enforce the rulings in the wrong way. Thus, Imam must be the most knowledgeable one. As a result, Imam is fully aware of the religious rulings and is the most knowledgeable person in this area.

Regarding Imams' knowledge of religion and religious ruling, Sayyid Murtaza states:

We are sure that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and Imam Ali (AS.) know God, His states and attributes, all the religious affairs, and Shari'a rulings. Imam must preserve them and prioritize them. It is not permissible for any of them to be in need of the other one in these affairs and ask the other one, just as the opponents also hold the same opinion" (1984, v. 1, p. 105).

He also adds elsewhere that, "however, Imam is aware of the Shari'a rulings, and is the most knowledgeable person in this area. This is so when we interpret this knowledge as the Shari'a since Imam knows Shari'a. However, having this knowledge is not intellectually necessary" (1990, p. 420).

To prove his claim, Sayyid Murtaza presents the following reasons:

For the intellectuals, it is obscene for Imam not to be knowledgeable about the religion and *Shri'a*. God does not do anything obscene. Therefore, according to the intellect, it is essential for Imam to be completely knowledgeable about the religion and *Shri'a*. Then, to clarify the obscenity, he adds "Imam has Imamatus and guardianship on all aspects of religion and Shari'a rulings. Therefore, he must be knowledgeable about all aspects of religion, since for the intellectuals, it is obscene that someone takes the responsibility of doing a task which he is not knowledgeable about" (Sayyid Murtaza, 1989, v. 2, p. 1364).

Imam is the proof of religion and the protector of the *shar'*: "one of the obligatory things for Imam is to be knowledgeable of all religious rulings since Imam is the proof in the religion and the protector of the Shar'" (Tusi, 2015, v. 1, p. 271).

It is obligatory for people to imitate Imam in all aspects of religion. In addition, it is not appropriate to imitate someone in something about which he is not knowledgeable.

The imam is the custodian of the religion and the custodian of the Shari'a. Therefore, Imam is knowledgeable in all aspects of religion. "It also implies that Imam knows all rulings. People must imitate Imam in all religious affairs. It is not possible to imitate someone in something he is not knowledgeable about" (Sayyid Murtaza, 1989, p. 16).

Knowledge of Qur'an

Imams (AS.) knew Qur'an and its interpretation. There are ample narrations indicating this. Al-Faḍl ibn Shadhān Neishabouri (1972) states, "there is no dispute that Imam know the halal and haram of Qur'an" (p. 108). Asbagh bn Nubatih quotes from Imam Ali (AS.) that "I swear God, I am the most knowledgeable person in knowing Quran. If there was no any verse in Qur'an, I would inform you what will happen until the resurrection Day".

The first part of the narration implies that Imam Ali (AS.) is the most knowledgeable person about Qur'an and its interpretation. This indicates that Imams' knowledge includes Qur'an and its interpretation.

In another hadith, Al-Faḍl ibn Shadhān (1972) says, "There is no dispute that Imam know the halal and haram of Qur'an and all the Qur'an in general" (p. 108).

Knowledge of Doctrinal and Theological Issues

Imams (AS.) were also knowledgeable about theological issues. They even trained many students in theology. This indicates that Imams (AS.) themselves mastered doctrinal issues and trained many students. There are many narrations proving this.

Hisham ibn al-Hakam quotes that "I asked Imam Sadiq (AS.) five hundred theological questions and he answered all of them. I wondered and said, "I thought you only know about halal and haram". Imam replied, "God does not send proof to people unless he is the most knowledgeable person in all areas" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 307).

Knowledge of the Unseen

Whether Imams (AS.) knew about the unseen or not has been discussed in some narrations. There is a narration rejecting this issue.

Once Anasiyyah bn Mus'ab told Imam Sadiq (AS.) "Abu al-Khitab attribute the knowledge of the unseen to you". Imam swears that he does not know the unseen and adds, "I shared a garden with Abdullah ibn Hassan. He owned the flat land with water and I owned the mountainous part. If I had known the unseen, it would have owned the better part of the land" (Ravandi, v. 2, p. 45).

In another narration, Imam Mahdi (AS.) responded to the letter of Muhammad ibn Ali karkhi, saying, "we do not share God's knowledge and power with Him, rather no one but Him is aware of the unseen... verily, I seek to renounce from those who believe we are aware of the unseen" (Tabarsi, 2007, p. 549)

In another hadith, Imam Baqir (AS.) states, "the Divine Majorette Name has seventy-three letters one of which is the knowledge of the unseen which is only known by God".

However, some narrations state that Imams (AS.) were aware of the unseen. "While giving a sermon, Imam Ali (AS.) informs his companions about the future events, and they ask him about his knowledge of the unseen. He says, "What I said is not based on knowledge of the unseen, rather it is learned. I have learned it from the knowledgeable one. The unseen is limited to knowing the time of the resurrection Day. Only God knows if the embryo is a boy or girl, pretty or ugly, generous or mean, and unfortunate or fortunate. Only God knows who will go to hell and who will be with the Holy prophet in paradise. These are the unseen about which nobody is aware but God. Other knowledge than these is granted to the Prophet by God. The Holy prophet thought them to me and prayed I save them in my heart" (Nahj al-Bilaghah, Sermon, 128)

In the debate between Hisham and the Syrian man, when Hisham said to the Syrian man that Imam is the successor of the Prophet both in knowledge and caliphate, he asked Hisham how he could know it. Hisham said "ask him whatever you want", and the man accepted it.

Imam Sadiq (AS.) said, " O Syrian man, let me tell you how your journey and how the road was". Then, Imam explained it. The Syrian man said, "You were right" and converted to Islam (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, pp. 33-35).

In this narration, Imam Sadiq (AS.) informs about the length and path of the Syrian man's journey, and the man confirms him. This shows Imam is aware of the unseen. Of course, Imams' knowledge of the unseen is only possible by Divine permission.

Jama't ibn Sa'd Khath'ami states once Mufadl was before Imam Sadiq (AS.). He asked Imam, "Does God oblige his servants to obey another servant though he is not aware of the heavens?"

Imam Sadiq (AS.) said, "No, God is too kind and merciful to oblige His servants to obey someone whom He does not inform in the morning and at night about the heavens" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 309).

Thus, God informs Imam from the unseen and the heavens. Accordingly, Imam knows about the unseen by Divine permission.

Knowledge of Past and Future Events

Some narrations focus on Imams' knowledge of past and future events which indicates Imams (AS.) were aware of the past and future. In a hadith from Imam Sadiq (AS.), it is narrated that his superiority over Moses and Khizr is his knowledge of past and future events, while Moses and Khizr were only aware of the past events. "If I had been with Moses and Khizr, I would have told them that I am more knowledgeable than them and informed them of the affairs that they were not aware of. Both Moses and Khizr informed people of the past events and had no information about the current situation and future events until the resurrection Day, while we have completely inherited it from the Holy Prophet (PBUH)" (Shaykh Mufid, 1993, v. 10, p. 11).

In another hadith, Imam Sadiq (AS.) states that "verily, I am aware of whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and past and future events" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 305).

In his *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, Shaykh Saduq quotes a narration from Imam Sadiq (AS.) to interpret the verse "...the Knower of the sensible and the Unseen..." (al-Jum'a: 8), saying "the unseen means future events and sensible means the past events" (1982, p. 146).

Imam Ali (AS.) has talked about his knowledge of future events, people's affairs, and whether people are doomed or saviors in his sermons (*Nahj al-Bilaghah*, sermons, 16, 92, 157, 174). Moreover, Shaykh Mufid (1992) narrates from Imam Ali (AS.) about Ibn Muljam Muradi's pledge of allegiance to him, saying Imam knew about future events in advance (v. 1, p. 11).

In addition, Asbagh bn Nubatih quotes from Imam Ali (AS.) that "ask me questions before I pass away. Verily, I have the first and the last knowledge. I swear God, I am the most knowledgeable person about Qur'an and its interpretation. If there was not even one verse in Qur'an, I would inform you of what will happen until the resurrection Day" (Shaykh Mufid, 1993, v. 1, p. 34). In this narration, Imam Ali (AS.) says he is aware of what will happen on the resurrection Day and whatever happens until the resurrection Day. In sum, he was aware past and future events. To confirm the above narration, another hadith is narrated from Imam Sadiq (AS.). "If I had been with Moses and Khizr, I would have told them that I am more knowledgeable than them and informed them of the affairs that they were not aware of. Both Moses and Khizr informed people of the past events and had no information about the current situation and future events until the resurrection Day, while we have completely inherited it from the Holy Prophet (PBUH)" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 305). In this Hadith, Imam Ali (AS.) views himself superior than Moses and Khizr due to his knowledge of past and future events.

Regarding Imams' knowledge of past and future events, Shaykh Mufid says, "Imams (AS.) were aware of past and future events. However, he does not consider this as Imam attributes and conditions. "I say Imams (AS.), indeed, were aware of the inner states of the people and knew whatever had not existed before. While this attribute is not obligatory for Imam and is not a condition of Imam, God indeed honored them and made them knowledgeable because of obeying Him and sticking to their Imamat". Regarding Imams' intellectual or auditory knowledge of the future events, he states, "it is not obligatory for Imam to have intellectual knowledge about future events; however, he must be auditory knowledgeable about future events. In his opinion, it is not accepted that Imams (AS.) are absolutely aware of the knowledge of the unseen: "but the absoluteness of the word that Imams (AS.) are aware of the unseen is not possible since it means they must be inherently knowledgeable about the objects, not acquire it. Inherent knowledge exclusively belongs only to God".

Although for Shaykh Mufid (1993), the claim that Imam are aware of all future events is baseless, he does not reject that Imam can also be aware of the apparent events by God. "And we do not deny that Imam is aware of the events, but it is granted to them by God. The saying that Imam knows everything is not absolute, we do not consider it correct. There is disagreement on it since there is no reason and logic

for it" (p. 67). Therefore, Imam is aware of both the seen and unseen by the Divine will. If God desires, Imam can be aware of the seen and the unseen.

Sayyid Murtaza (2001) believes that being aware and informing about an event before its occurrence (knowledge of the future events) is one of the conditions of Imamat." to inform people of the events before they happen is not one condition of Imamat since this is a miracle. Sometimes it is permissible for Imam to perform a miracle, and sometimes it is not permissible" (v. 1, p. 282). He also holds that it is not obligatory for Imam to be knowledgeable about past and future events. "It is not obligatory for Imam to be aware of the unseen and past and future events" (p. 394). However, he believes that God has informed Imams (AS.) of past and future events since according to many narrations and hadiths, Imams (AS.) are aware of the unseen (p. 282).

Sayyid Murtaza (2001) considers Imams' (AS.) knowledge of the past and future granted to them by the Divine will as the dignity, virtue, and a bow from God (v. 1, p. 194). Regarding the necessity of Imams' knowledge about the unseen and past and future events, He argues that,

Indeed, Imam is not aware of the unseen and the past and future since it makes him share with God His eternal knowledge. And God's knowledge is infinite, so this makes Imam be inherently knowledgeable. But it was proved that Imams' knowledge through tahdith (revelation). If one's knowledge is infinite, the person himself must also be infinite, which is impossible (Sayyid Murtaza, 2001, v. 3, p. 131).

Explanation of his argument:

If the Imams' knowledge is obligatory for all events, two phenomena occur:

Imam shares all information with God.

If Imams' (AS.) is infinite, then his knowledge must be inherent not acquired.

If someone wants to know about all affair and the events of the world, he must gain it through partial forms.

The events of the world are infinite.

So, he must have infinite forms in his mind, while it is impossible.

Therefore, the Almighty God made Imams (AS.) aware of the events of the world, though it is not necessary for Imam to have such knowledge since having this knowledge has nothing to do with Imams' duties. Whatever is not Imams' duty is not logically obligatory for him to have.

Knowledge of the Deaths and Disasters

Asbagh bn Nubatih narrates that "when someone visited Imam, Imam precisely informed him of the time of his illness, it causes, and the day and moment of his death, saying prepare yourself for death" (Hurr Ameli, 1992, v. 1, p. 435).

In another narration, Ibn Abbas states that Imam Ali (AS.) would get informed about seditions by reciting *Mu'min* surah" (Ibn Tawous, 1990, p. 73).

Accordingly, it can be concluded that Imam was aware of future deaths and disasters.

Knowledge of Their Own Martyrdom

There is a narration showing Imams' knowledge of his own martyrdom. This indicates Imams (AS.) were aware of their own destiny. Abu Basir narrates from Imam Sadiq (AS.) that if Imam is not aware of his own destiny, he is not God's proof to the people: "Imam is not knowledgeable about

whatever is granted to him and taken from him. It is not so because he is God's proof for the people" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, 193).

According to this narration, Imams (AS.) were aware of their fate, the time and place of their martyrdom. The fact that they designated the next Imam a few days before their own martyrdom can confirm that they were aware of their martyrdom time (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, 193).

Shaykh Mufid (1993) divides the related narrations into three groups:

- Reliable narration showing Imam Ali (AS.) was fully aware of his martyrdom.
- Reliable narration showing Imam Ali (AS.) knew his killer.
- Narrations not showing if Imam Ali (AS.) was aware of the time of his martyrdom or not.

According to Shaykh Mufid, let's assume there are narrations showing Imam Ali (AS.) was aware of the time of his martyrdom. This does not require Imams' (AS.) going to the mosque on the 19th night of *Ramadan* to be based on *al-talukah* (Baqaraeh: 159) since God possibly assigned and obliged him to do two tasks: patience over martyrdom and submission to martyrdom (Shaykh Mufid, 1993). He believes this assignment is useful for two reasons. First, the Almighty God wanted him to reach a higher level reaching which was only possible through this way. Second, the Almighty God knew that Imam would obey the duty which was could not be done by others (Shaykh Mufid, 1993). He finally adds "Therefore, in this assignment, there is a favor for people that cannot be replaced by anything" "(Shaykh Mufid, 1993). For Sayyid Murtaza (2001), the related narrations include:

- Narrations showing Imam Ali (AS.) was aware of his martyrdom.
- Narrations implying Imam Ali (AS.) knew Ibn Muljam would be his killer.

Sayyid Murtaza (2001) believes that it was not necessary for Imam to know about his martyrdom since if Imam had known about it, he must have prevented it and must have not put himself in danger. "It is not permissible for Imam to be aware, whether limited or specific, of the time of his martyrdom since if he is aware of it, and he is obliged to defend himself not to be killed. Thus, this kind of knowledge is not obligatory" (v. 3, p. 131). So, Sayyid Murtaza (2001) believes that Imam Ali (AS.) did not know about the time of his martyrdom and it was not necessary for him to know it, while Shaykh Mufid holds that Imam did not know about the time of his martyrdom whereas it was necessary for him to know it.

Knowledge of the Prophets and Angels' Knowledge

Al-Fadl ibn Shadhan (1972) quotes from Imam Baqir (AS.) that Imam said, "God has two types of knowledge: 1. the knowledge which God reveals for the angels and prophets. 2. the knowledge which is known by nobody" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 193).

In another narration, Imam Baqir (AS.) states that Imams (AS.) have the prophets and angels' knowledge, saying " indeed, God has two kinds of knowledge: the bestowed one and the hidden one. The bestowed knowledge is everything known by the angels and prophets and we (Imams) also know it. However, the hidden knowledge is only known by God and nobody is aware of it" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 289).

According to this narration, it can be concluded that Imams know the prophets and angels' knowledge and that all knowledge of the prophets and angels is present before Imams.

Knowledge of Mankind's Inner States

The fact that Imams (AS.) were aware of the people's inner states can be proved using some narrations. Jabir quotes Imam Baqir (AS.) saying "verily, we know people and when we see them, we

realize the truth of their faith and hypocrisy" (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 321). Due to knowing the truth of people's faith and hypocrisy and their inner state, Imam gave different answers to the same questions asked by different people.

In another narration, someone asks Imam Reza (AS.) "how do you know about what is happening in people's hearts?" this shows that the person already knew that Imam was aware of people's hearts.

In a similar narration, Abu Hamza al-Thumali asks Imam Sajjad (AS.) "Are Imams aware of people's conscience?" (Saffar, 1983, p. 242). There are also ample narrations indicating Imams (AS.) answered people's questions before they articulate them. These confirm that Imams (AS.) were aware of people's inner states.

Regarding this, Shaykh Mufid believes that Imams (AS.) sometimes were aware of people's inner states: "Indeed, Imams (AS.) knew about people's conscience and inner states and were aware of them" (Shaykh Mufid, 1993. P. 67). During a debate with a Mu'tazili scholar on the absence of Imam Mahdi (AS.), Shaykh Mufid says,

I do not believe that Imam is aware of the secrets and inner states of the people of the world. He is aware of the apparent affairs just like all humans. In case he is aware of the inner states, he has granted it by the Almighty God or through the prophet or the predictions of their fathers, or through sincere dreams and other means (Shaykh Mufid, 2008, 114)

So, Shaykh Mufid believes that Imam is aware of the inner state of some people, not all people. In addition, if he is aware of people's inner state, it is by Divine permission. In this regard, Sayyid Murtaza (2012) says about the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that "we do not believe the Almighty God has informed Prophet of the inner states of the people" (p. 294). Regarding the necessity of having such knowledge for Imams (AS.), Sayyid Murtaza (1984) states "it is not necessary for Imam to be aware of the secrets and inner states of the people" (v. 1, p. 395).

Knowledge of the Different Languages

Abu Basir asks Imam Kazim (AS.) about the ways to know Imam. He says Imam knows the language of all humans, birds, animals, and anything that has spirit. This is how one can distinguish Imam (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 75). In another narration, Abasalt says to Imam Reza (AS.) that he was surprised at his mastery of different languages. Imam replies "I am God's proof for people. The Almighty God does not designate the one who does not know people's languages as a proof for them" (Shaykh Saduq, 1998, v. 2, p. 320).

Shaykh Mufid (1985) presents Imams' knowledge of all languages along with their knowledge of all industries and professions. According to him, it is neither obligatory nor impossible from the intellect viewpoint, and there are authentic narrations implying Imam must know different languages" (p. 310).

Knowledge of the Names of Shiites and Lovers

Al-Marzuban ibn 'Imran asks Imam Reza (AS.) "am I one of your Shiites? Is my name among your Shiites?" and Imam (AS.) confirmed it (Saffar, 1983, p. 193)

Abdullah bn Jundab says Imam Reza (AS.) wrote him a letter saying "indeed, God taught us the names of our all Shiites along with their fathers' names..." (Kulayni, 2004, v. 1, p. 555).

According to this and other narrations, it can be understood that Imams (AS.) were aware of the names of their Shiites and lovers.

Knowledge of Whatever that is Happening in the Heavens and the Earth

In a narration from Imam Baqir (AS.), he states "do you accept that the Almighty God obliges His servants to obey His saints and hide the news of the heavens from them and refuse the principles of the knowledge which are reheated to the questions being asked from them and maintain the religion basis? (Kulayni, 2004, v. 2, p. 308)

Accordingly, it can be concluded that first, it is impossible for God to oblige people to obey someone from whom He hides what is happening in the heavens and the earth. Second, it is impossible for the proof of God not to be aware of what is happening in the heavens and the earth.

Knowledge of Different Industries and Professions

Shaykh Mufid (1993) examines this from two viewpoints. First, from the intellect viewpoint; second, from the narration viewpoint. He believes that Imams' knowledge of different industries and professions is intellectually neither obligatory nor impossible. He also says there are authentic narrations that show Imams (AS.) had such knowledge. He further adds "if it is proved, then narrations essentially indicate its certainty. However, in my opinion, there is a problem in proving its certainty from narrations' viewpoint" (p. 67). Although he firstly states that there are authentic narrations proving Imams' knowledge of different industries and professions, in the end, he argues that there are some problems regarding the given narrations. This needs to be further investigated.

Sayyid Murtaza (1990) believes that it is not generally obligatory for Imam "to know the sciences that are not related to the religion and *Shar'*" (p. 434). He argues that Imams' knowledge of different industries and professions is not obligatory since he is not a leader in these affairs" (1990, p. 433). He adds in case of any conflict, "He can refer to the expert and rule based on their opinions. If there is a disagreement between the experts, he can rely on just one. In case, they were all equally just, he can rely on whomever he wants" (1989, v. 2, p. 30). Regarding the Holy Prophet's knowledge of writing, Sayyid Murtaza says "it is not obligatory for him, rather it is permissible and argues about it presenting the following premises.

1. It is not necessary for the Prophet and Imam to know industries.
2. Writing, just like textile and dyeing, is one of the industries.

Therefore, Imams' knowledge of writing is not obligatory, rather is possible (v. 1, pp. 104, 105). Thus, knowledge of industries and professions is not a condition for Imam.

Knowledge of Politics and Governing Methods

One duty of Imam is to govern. It is obvious that it is not possible to govern without knowing the politics and governing methods. Therefore, knowledge of politics and governance is intellectually obligatory for Imam.

Presenting attributes of Imam, Sayyid Murtaza (1990) explains that it is intellectually necessary for Imam to know politics. He writes "one of the attributes of Imam is to be the most knowledgeable in Shari'a rulings and politics and strategies ... what is obligatory for imam is to know different aspects of politics since the mission is not separate from politics, and it is not possible for Imam not to know politics. Thus, it is obligatory and necessary for Imam to know politics" (p. 429).

Conclusion

It can be said that since Imams' knowledge is based on Divine training, its scope is vast and includes many aspects.

Imam is knowledgeable about the Shari'a rulings since otherwise, he would change the rulings. It can be said that Imams (AS.) are the source of Shari'a ruling. They also know Qur'an and its interpretation. In fact, they are the real commentators of Qur'an. Imams (AS.) were knowledgeable about theological and doctrinal issues and trained many students. Furthermore, they are aware were aware of the unseen, past and future events, disasters and deaths. They also were aware of the time of their martyrdom, though some scholars don't accept it. In addition, they knew the knowledge of the angels and prophets, inner state of the people, different languages, the names of their Shiites and lovers, and what was going on in the heavens and the earth. Finally, they mastered different industries and professions, politics and governing methods.

Some of the given kinds of knowledge are obligatory for Imam. That is, they are required conditions of Imam. They include knowledge Shari'a, Qur'an, theological and doctrinal issues, politics and governing methods. Some others are not obligatory and required conditions of Imam including knowledge of different industries and professions, but Imam can master them.

There are other kinds of knowledge that are not obligatory for the imam to have and are not considered as part of the conditions of Imam, such as knowledge of different industries and occupations. If he does not have it, there will be no problem with his Imamate.

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