

Human and the First Manifestation of God

Encapsulation of Creation

What Is the Relationship between the Human Being and the First Manifestation of God?

The question of the manifestation of God in the realm of existence is a significant topic in Islamic mysticism. Mystics consider the world to be a manifestation of the names and attributes of God and believe that every being in the world is a manifestation of God's beauty and manifests Him and His attributes. This concept is beautifully depicted in our mystical literature. Mystics and seekers of truth have composed unique poems about this topic. A clear example of that is the passionate poems of Hafez:

In eternity without beginning, of glory, the splendor-ray of Thy beauty
boasted. Revealed became love; and, upon all the world, fire dashed.

What that splendor that in the mirror, the beauty of thy face made,

All the picture in to the mirror of fancy fell.

From the true Beloved is my pain and my remedy, also,

A sacrifice for Him became my heart and my life, also.

Manifestation means to appear or to be revealed. To understand how God is manifested in all things, imagine a room filled with mirrors of different shapes, designs, and sizes. When you stand in the middle of this room, you see thousands of different images of yourself reflected in the mirrors surrounding you. Each mirror,

depending on its size and shape, reflects a unique aspect of your face. You are not thousands of people, but one person; however, you are manifested in thousands of different images. God's manifestation in the universe is similar.

Contrary to popular belief, God is not a distant being beyond the galaxies. God is the flowing existence in all things. This means that wherever you look, you see a manifestation of God's beauty.¹ From this mobile phone you are holding, to mountains, seas, stars, plants, animals, microscopic organisms, and more, all beings in the universe, from the material world to the Celestial kingdom, are the manifestation of God's names and attributes, and basically there is nothing in the world except the manifestation of God in beings. However, these manifestations are not the same, rather, God manifests Himself in each being in proportion to the being's existential structure and the purpose of its creation.² For example, water is the manifestation of the name "*Al-Hayy*" (the Ever-Living), the flower is a manifestation of the name "*Al-Jamil*" (the Beautiful), and Satan is a manifestation of the name "*Al-Muddil*" (the Misleader).

Among all beings in the universe, humans are the most perfect manifestation of God and the only being in whom God has placed all His names. Due to this comprehensiveness, mystics have called humans the most comprehensive entity, the lesser universe (microcosm), and the encapsulation of creation. This is because, on the one hand, he is the perfect manifestation of divine names, and on the other hand, he is the sum of all levels of creation, from *Jabarut* (intelligible world) to the material world.

¹. To God belong the East and the West. Whichever way you turn, there is God's presence. God is Omnipresent and Omniscient. (Quran, 1:115)

². There is not a thing but with Us are its stores, and We send it down only in precise measure. (Quran, 15: 21)

What stages does a human being go through in the process of traversing the levels of creation, and how does he achieve this comprehensiveness? What is the connection between humans and the first manifestation of God, and what does it mean to say that humans are the encapsulation of all the realms of creation?

In this lesson, we will answer these questions and the relationship between the human being and the first manifestation of God. Before that, it is important to note that, **contrary to the beliefs of some followers of Christianity and Judaism, the meaning of the manifestation of God in the human is not the representation and incarnation of God in human beings.** The essence of God is infinite and can never incarnate in a finite being. The manifestation of God in humans and other beings is similar in some ways to the manifestation of scientists in their inventions and the manifestation of artists in their artworks. Obviously, the creation of artworks and inventions does not mean the incarnation of the soul and essence of the artist or scientist within them. Rather, these works merely reflect the thoughts, talents, abilities, and creativity of the artist or scientist.

The Relationship between the Human and the First Manifestation of God

The human being is a comprehensive being and the encapsulation of creation. This means that a condensed version of everything that exists in the universe also exists within the human. The existential structure of the human is related to all the components of creation, all the realms, and all beings, from matter to God Himself. The realms of existence, from the lowest to the highest, are as follows:

-*Alam Nasut*, which is the world of material and sensory things, possessing material qualities such as mass, volume, motion, time, space, etc.

-*Alam Malakut*, which is also called *Alam Mesal* (the realm of ideas), *The Barzakh*, and the world of imagination. This realm is at a higher level and state than the nature and is the boundary between matter and the immaterial world. It has material qualities like size and color, but lacks weight, space, time, or motion. For this reason, Islamic philosophers consider this world to have imperfect immateriality.

-*Alam Jabarut*, or the intelligible world, which is superior to *Alam Malakut*. It has complete immateriality and does not have any of the characteristics of matter.

-*Alam Lahut*, or the world of divinity, which is related to the holy existence of God and in fact the world of divine names and attributes.

The human is a collection of all these worlds; in a sense, he is connected to all of them. In terms of existential dimensions, the human being shares the inanimate dimension with inanimate objects, the vegetative dimension with plants, the animal dimension with animals, and the intellectual dimension with angels. In terms of the faculties of the soul, each faculty has a corresponding pair in the external world. Sensory and bodily faculties are sensory and material in essence and desire sensory and material forms. The imaginal and estimative faculties are of the nature of the *Alam Malkut* and connect with this world. The faculty of the intellect is completely immaterial, and it is related to *Alam Jabarut* or the intelligible world. The Spirit of God has been breathed into the supra-rational dimension, so it finds joy and pleasure in companionship, pairing, and connection with God. The human even has the characteristics of Satan within himself, and for this reason, many people become the slaves of Satan because they are in harmony with him.

The reason why humans are the encapsulated form of all the components of the realm of existence is due to the purpose of human creation and their existential structure. As previously mentioned, the purpose behind the creation of the realm of existence is the creation of the human being, and the purpose of creating the human is that he becomes Allah's deputy and the most perfect manifestation of God. To achieve this lofty goal, God breathed His Spirit into us. The Spirit of God refers to the truth that God created in His first manifestation, which is the initial state of creation and is considered the being most similar to God, as we have previously discussed.

This primary truth, which is called Allah's deputy and most perfect example is the truth of the perfect human, i.e., the Prophet and the infallible Imams (Peace be upon them). In fact, God first created the truth of the perfect human, and then created other realms. We are also created from this truth. Therefore, a copy and encapsulation of all the components of the realms of existence are hidden within us. In other words, all the realms of existence, from the material world to the Celestial Kingdom, are subservient to the existence of humans and have been created from the beginning in accordance with the purpose of our creation and to lead us to the highest levels of perfection, which is to become similar and close to God.

Becoming similar to God is not possible all at once and is a gradual and step-by-step process. God has created our existential structure in such a way that we need to be in a challenging environment to go through the stages of perfection, an environment where opposing forces such as failures, calamities, temptations, and the like attack us from all sides and stand in our way. Without such an environment,

growth and development will not be possible, and no perfection will blossom within us. That is why God has sent our soul from the highest levels of existence to the lowest level, i.e., the material world. This is because among all the realms, only the world has this property. So as we stated, the first thing God created was the truth of the human. This is why we are in harmony with each and every other part of the realm of existence. These parts are in fact derived from the truth of our existence and have been created for our development and to reach the ultimate destination of our creation.

If you have any questions or doubts about the topics discussed in this lesson, please let us know in the comments section.