

Inner Peace with the Imam: A Foundation for Our Lifestyle and Tranquility

Why Lasting Peace of the Heart Cannot Take Shape Without Inner Peace with the Imam

Sometimes we seem to have everything we need. Our lives are going well, we have a good job, sufficient income, and even a sense of outward calm. Yet deep within the heart, there is a vague feeling of imbalance. It is like a clock that appears to work perfectly but, for no clear reason, it is slow every now and then. There is no problem and no major crisis, still, it feels as though something inside this system is not quite in its proper place. Many people have experienced this feeling. It cannot be resolved by entertainment, nor by external success.

If a ship's compass is slightly misaligned, the ship does not sink immediately. It may even travel correctly for many miles. But the longer the journey continues, the farther it drifts from its true destination. Human life is the same. As long as our inner relationship with the true guide of the path, the Infallible Imam, is not properly aligned, we may keep moving for years, yet little by little, we move away from the real destination without realizing it.

In Shia thought, the central issue for a human being is not merely seeing the Imam in the society, nor even being alive in the era of the advent. The real issue is inner peace with the Imam. This is a relationship that must be established in a person's soul, decisions, and lifestyle. The Quran clearly warns: "On the Day We will summon every people with their leader/Imam" [1]. This verse shows that our relationship

with the Infallible Imam is not just a matter of belief or a passing emotion. It is the measure of our identity, path, and destiny.

Even if the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (Peace be upon him) were to occur, each person would still need to have achieved inner peace with the Imam within their innate system. If his advent does not take place during our lifetime, this issue still remains necessary. It is a question that will be asked of us on the very first night after our *wafat* [transfer from this world to the hereafter]. Therefore, inner peace with the Imam is not an issue related to an “uncertain future.” It is an issue of “the lifestyle of a living human being” here and now.

In this lesson, we will show how inner peace with the Imam is formed, what obstacles stand in its way, and how it can move from a mental concept to a lived and lasting experience in everyday life. This peace results in not only mental peace, but also a deep existential certainty on the path of both this world and the hereafter.

The Central Issue of the Human Being: Peace with the *Wali* of Allah (Divinely-Chosen Guardian)

Human beings have many concerns in their lives: livelihood, relationships, decisive choices, anxiety about the future, and fear of failure. Yet among all these issues, there is one fundamental matter. If it remains unresolved, none of the other issues truly fall into order. If it is resolved correctly, many of life’s complexities begin to make sense and find clear direction. That issue is the human being’s relationship with the *wali* of Allah, not as a mere mental belief, but as a living reality within the person.

To understand this, imagine an employee working in a large organization who is not truly aligned with the organization's main director. They may perform their tasks, keep regular working hours, and even appear successful. However, because their decisions are not aligned with the policies and goals of the central leadership, they will sooner or later face exhaustion and a sense of meaninglessness in their work. The main problem is not laziness or lack of skill. Rather it is a lack of alignment with the origin of decision-making.

Human life is the same. In the logic of the Quran, no human being exists without an infallible Imam (leader). Either they have achieved inner balance and their Imam is the *wali* of Allah, or balance has not formed and their Imam becomes one of the desires rooted in the four dimensions of their being. Based on verse seventy-one of *Surah al-Isra'*, which we examined together, who we really are is measured by what we actually follow and what drives our daily lives, not by what we say we believe or how we try to look.

From this perspective, the main issue is not whether we call ourselves people who are waiting for the Infallible Imam, or whether we claim to love the Imam. The real question is whether, within our inner system and our lifestyle, we have achieved inner peace with the Imam or not. Peace here does not mean the absence of an outward conflict. It means harmony, alignment, and accepting the authority of the Imam in decisions and choices.

A simpler example is that of a driver who knows the route and the destination but refuses to pay attention to road signs. He may continue driving for a while, but the farther they go, the costlier their movement becomes and the more confusing the path appears. Their problem is not ignorance of the destination. It is the refusal to

accept guidance along the way. Many forms of inner confusion in human life begin exactly at this point: when a person knows the Imam, but in practice does not align the course of their life with him.

Peace with the *wali* of Allah means accepting that the standard for distinguishing right from wrong, profit from loss, and progress from decline is not based solely on personal analysis or the norms of the time. Rather, the true measure is the guidance of the Infallible Imam. Wherever this standard is set aside, even if we appear calm, we experience inner conflict and gradual exhaustion within ourselves. This is the hidden misalignment that many of us feel, without recognizing its true origin.

On the other hand, when this peace is established, life does not collapse inwardly, even under the most difficult conditions. It is like a team whose members are all aligned with the coach's strategy. Even if the match is tough or the temporary result is not in their favor, they do not suffer from inner confusion or tension. Alignment with the *wali* of Allah plays the same role in our lives. It provides a framework that brings coherence to our decisions, clarity to the path, and makes certain the heart.

Therefore, the primary issue, before anything else, is whether we have inner peace with the Imam or an inner state of conflict with him as the *wali* of Allah. This is not an issue postponed to an uncertain future, nor is it resolved by changes in external conditions. This relationship is built or destroyed here and now in our worldly life, through our choices, priorities, and lifestyle. It is with this very relationship that we move through the path of this world and enter the stage of final accountability (Day of Judgment).

Inner Peace with the Imam: An Issue That Remains with the Person Until the Moment of *Wafat*

Many issues and problems in life are resolved by changes in circumstances. Poverty may be eased by increased income. Ignorance can be reduced through education. Even some anxieties fade when the environment or lifestyle changes. However, some issues are not of this kind. They are neither dependent on time nor resolved by a change of situation. These issues accompany us from the moments we make decisions in this world until the moment we pass away. Inner peace with the Imam is one of these issues.

Sometimes it is assumed that the main problem is not living in the time of the advent of the Promised Savior and living during the period of occultation. It is as if, once the advent occurs, everything will automatically be set right! This is an incorrect way to view the matter. Even after the advent, people will live according to the degree of their inner alignment with the Infallible Imam. The advent reveals the truth of the Imam, but inner peace is something that must already have been formed within the soul before that moment.

To understand this, consider the example of a student who has attended a teacher's class for years, but has never accepted the method of learning or the rules of the classroom. On the day of the exam, the teacher's presence in the room changes nothing. The problem was never a lack of knowledge of the teacher's face, but an inner misalignment with the path of learning. In the same way, seeing the Imam directly or living in his era, if not accompanied by inner peace, does not resolve the core issue of the human being.

The verse in the Quran we mentioned before points to this truth with the precise expression. This verse shows that a person is judged not by wishes or claims, but by their real and inner relationship with the Infallible Imam. This relationship is not formed at the moment of *wafat*. It is the outcome of a long path shaped by our choices, priorities, and lifestyle.

From this perspective, the first night after *wafat* marks the beginning of questioning about this very relationship. It is a question of which axis of guidance a person was aligned with throughout life, and what truly shaped and directed their path. It is like a traveler whose arrival at the destination depends directly on the route taken during the journey. If the path has been followed according to a correct map and reliable guidance, surely the traveler arrives at the intended destination. If not, no justification or initial intention can replace it. Worldly life may appear long to us, but in comparison to the hereafter it is a limited journey. If we do not set our course correctly at the beginning of the trip, there is no opportunity to correct it at the end.

For this reason, inner peace with the Imam is not an issue related to “after death” or “the era of the Imam.” It is an issue that is entirely about our present moment. Every decision, choice, and priority either strengthens this peace or weakens it. A human being enters the next realm based on this inner system, not with unrefined wishes or unfulfilled intentions.

In the end, if a person cannot align their heart, intellect, and actions with the *wali* of Allah throughout life, a change of circumstances or living at the time of the Imam’s advent will not alter the essence of this misalignment. Inner peace with the

Imam is a reality that is either built during life or remains, as an unresolved issue, with the human being until the moment of their *wafat*.

The Meaning of Inner Peace with the Imam and Its Obstacles

When we speak of “inner peace,” the mind often turns to mental peace, reduced anxiety, or a temporary feeling of comfort. However, inner peace with the Imam has a deeper and more fundamental meaning than these common interpretations. This peace is not merely a pleasant feeling. It is the human being’s placement within the correct order of existence, an order whose central axis is the *wali* of Allah. In the logic of the Quran and Islamic wisdom, peace means a return to harmony after rupture and misalignment. Whenever something is removed from its true position, corruption emerges. Whenever it returns to its proper place, peace and soundness appear. The inner world of the human being follows the same rule. When the heart, will, and intellect become detached from the axis of guidance, a hidden form of disorder arises, even if the outward life seems calm and well organized.

To clarify this meaning, consider the human body. If even one small organ falls out of harmony with the rest of the body, it not only loses its own proper function, but also disrupts the entire system. Pain is the sign of this lack of coordination. Inner disturbances in human life are often signs of a similar pain: the pain of misalignment with the axis of guidance.

Inner peace with the Imam means that the command center of a person’s life, the place where decisions, values, and priorities are formed, becomes aligned with the *wali* of Allah/Imam. In this state, the intellect understands, the heart accepts, and

action moves along the same path. The result of this harmony is a peace that rises from within, not a calm that depends on external conditions.

However, this peace is not easily achieved, because serious obstacles stand in its way. The first obstacle is inner fragmentation. It describes a state where one understands what is right, but one's desires pull in a different direction. It is like someone who knows which path is correct, yet old habits prevent movement in that direction. In other words, knowledge has occurred, but it has not yet become an asset of the heart. This inner duality drains mental energy and leaves the heart restless.

The second obstacle is an incorrect definition of success and happiness. When the criterion for success is shaped solely by social norms, constant comparison with others, or short-term gain, a person is drawn, often without noticing, away from the axis of the Imam's guidance. It is like a student whose only goal is a good grade, not learning itself. Such a student may show outward progress for a while, but in the long run fails to achieve real growth. This kind of success does not bring inner peace. Instead, it produces hidden anxiety.

Another obstacle is gradual negligence. This is not a sudden or obvious form of neglect, but a slow and almost unnoticed distancing from the standards of guidance. Many inner misalignments are the result of small but repeated decisions. Each one may seem insignificant on its own, but together they quietly change the course of a person's life.

Self-centeredness is also a serious barrier to inner peace with the Imam. Wherever a person gives priority to personal analysis, individual desire, or momentary convenience over the guidance of the Imam, conflict begins. Even if this conflict is

seemingly justifiable on the surface, it manifests inwardly as anxiety, doubt, or a sense of emptiness.

In the face of these obstacles, inner peace with the Imam means restoring the axis of life to its proper place. This involves correcting one's perspective, reassessing priorities, and aligning one's lifestyle with the *wali* of Allah. This peace is not the result of a single momentary decision. It is a gradual process that takes shape through awareness, care, and constant recommitment.

Ultimately, whenever a person experiences deep inconsistency, unexplained inner turmoil, or a sense of inner exhaustion, this sign can be taken seriously. It is an indication that, somewhere within the inner system, peace with the Imam has been damaged. Restoring this peace does not begin by escaping from life. It begins by correcting one's relationship with the axis of guidance, a correction that brings calm not as a direct goal, but as its natural outcome.

The Dimensions of Inner Peace with the Imam

Inner peace with the Imam is not a vague state or a passing emotional feeling. It has a coherent structure and becomes stable only when the elements of this structure are properly placed alongside one another. Many unstable experiences of calm, or persistent inner unrest occur because one of these elements is active while the others are ignored. The peace built on only one dimension does not endure, just as a one-legged chair, no matter how strong, cannot be used. In Shia teachings, inner peace with the Imam has three essential dimensions: the gnostic (*ma'rifa*-related) dimension, the emotional dimension, and the practical

dimension. These three do not function independently. They operate in an active and mutual relationship with one another.

1. The gnostic dimension: knowing the status of the Imam in the guidance system

The starting point of any real connection is [knowledge](#). Without correct knowledge, even the most sincere emotions can lead a person astray. One who does not truly know the Imam cannot reach inner peace with the Imam, because they do not know with whom they must be aligned, or at what level this alignment should take place. To clarify this dimension, imagine someone who wants to operate a complex industrial machine without reading its manual. They may be able to turn it on and even use it for a while, but the risk of error, damage, and sudden breakdown is very high. In our life system, the Imam plays the role of that comprehensive guide.

Knowing the status of the Imam means understanding that he is not merely a respected historical figure or a moral role model. He is the axis for distinguishing truth from falsehood, the standard of individual and social guidance, and the one who regulates the direction of human life.

According to Shia teachings, the Imam is the central pillar of religion and the channel through which divine guidance flows in the world. As long as this status is not properly understood, the relationship with the Imam remains superficial, and inner peace with the Imam does not take shape. Many inner disturbances arise from this lack of awareness. They appear when a person relies solely on personal analysis or on the norms of the time in important life decisions, instead of referring to the standard of guidance, and then they pay the cost of that choice by their inner disturbances.

2. The emotional dimension: love for the Imam and inner certainty

Knowledge remains lifeless, if it does not reach the heart. The emotional dimension of the inner peace with the Imam is the bridge that turns understanding into a lived experience. Love for the Imam is not merely a religious feeling. It is a force that moves a person along the path of guidance.

To understand this dimension, consider the relationship between a student and a teacher when the student both believes in the teacher's knowledge and trusts them at a heartfelt level. In such a relationship, the student not only listens to the teacher's words, but also relies on them in moments of doubt. Love for the Imam plays a similar role. It creates a form of inner certainty that saves a person from being lost among conflicting options.

A heart that is emotionally connected to the Imam is less likely to collapse in times of crisis, not because problems have diminished, but because the heart is attached to a stable axis. This love reduces fear of the future and heals the sense of existential loneliness. Without this emotional bond, even the deepest forms of knowledge will fail to function effectively at critical moments of life.

3. The practical dimension: aligning one's lifestyle with the guidance of the Imam

If knowledge and love do not manifest in action, inner peace gradually erodes. Daily life is the primary testing ground for this peace. Action is where it becomes clear how real are one's understanding of and love for their Imam.

For example, imagine a sports team whose members trust in the coach's abilities and even care for their coach, but on the field, each player acts according to their

own preferences. The result of such a situation is failure and disorder. Similarly, a relationship with the Imam bears fruit only when our decisions, priorities, and lifestyle are aligned with his guidance.

This dimension includes even the smallest choices: from daily habits and social interactions to how one deals with power, wealth, reputation, and pleasure. Inner peace with the Imam emerges when a person bases these choices not on momentary desires or social pressure, but on the standard of guidance. Such alignment gradually produces a deep serenity that is the natural result of inner coherence.

Inner peace with the Imam becomes a lasting reality only when correct understanding, dynamic love, and aligned action come together along a common path. Whenever one of these dimensions is weakened, peace is disrupted, and the signs appear as either hidden or visible unrest in life.

These three dimensions are not only inseparable, but each one also strengthens or weakens the others. Knowledge provides direction; love generates motivation; action brings both into real life. The result of this harmony is a peace that does not depend on external conditions and is not destroyed by changing circumstances. It takes root deep within the soul and keeps a person steadfast on the path of guidance.

References

[1]. Quran, 17:71