



## The Epistemological Grounds of Mahdism: Ayatollah Nasserī's Perspectives

Leila Mohsenian<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Mahdism is a branch of Imamate that falls within the category of theological and doctrinal issues. The epistemological foundations of Mahdism encompass questions regarding what, why, and how knowledge of Imam al-Mahdī is acquired, which are explored alongside other doctrinal principles. The late Ayatollah Nasserī is recognized as a prominent contemporary figure in Mahdism. His motif was “Yā Ibn al-Ḥasan” (addressed to Imam al-Mahdī), and he left behind many writings and speeches on this topic. This research employs a descriptive-analytic method and references his written works to elucidate the epistemological foundations of Mahdism. Based on Ayatollah Nasserī's intellectual framework, these foundations can be examined in two categories: studies of the Imam and studies of humanity. The primary grounds related to the studies of the Imam include: guardianship (wilāya) and the position of the Imam within the existential order of the world; the superiority of Imamate over prophethood; the existential rationale for Imam al-Mahdī; existential degrees; and the character and attributes of Imam al-Mahdī, such as the inheritance of God's greatest name, independence by virtue of God, subsistence-based comprehensiveness, existential expansion, and mediation between the unseen and seen realms. The primary grounds related to human studies include the existential expansion of humans in relation to guardianship, the distinction between Shiism and mere love for the Ahl al-Bayt, the concepts of remembrance and recourse, the issue of occultation (al-ghayba), and the challenge of awaiting the savior.

**Keywords:** Ayatollah Nasserī, Imam studies, Mahdism, epistemology, guardianship.



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human life with a divine significance, guiding individuals toward the stage of servitude, which is the ultimate purpose of creation. Research findings indicate that, when viewed in applied or practical terms, monotheism serves as the foundation for moral values and guidelines, encompassing concepts such as safety, serenity, mental health, purposefulness, life satisfaction, happiness, heartfelt elation, positive thinking, and the avoidance of deviations, negligence, and worldliness.

**Keywords:** monotheism, function of monotheism in epistemic terms, function of monotheism in emotional terms, function of monotheism in behavioral terms.





## Functions of Monotheism in Human Life: Ayatollah Nasseri's Perspective

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### **Abstract**

A belief is a well-established cognition that can significantly influence an individual's emotions and behaviors, often more profoundly than superficial knowledge. Among the principles of belief, monotheism is fundamental, serving as the foundation for other beliefs. The belief in God's oneness has been central to Muslim faith and is a distinguishing feature of Islam, setting it apart from other religions. Monotheism represents the pinnacle of knowledge of God, as individuals reach a stage where they recognize that all existence and its dimensions depend on Allah. This is the highest degree of monotheism. A person who attains this level becomes a perfect monotheist, achieved through the perfection of knowledge and faith, stemming from the servitude and worship of God. This article references transmitted religious sources and employs a descriptive and analytic method to address the functions of monotheism according to Ayatollah Nasseri. The findings indicate that monotheism is not merely a neutral belief devoid of effects on human behavior and actions; rather, it exerts significant influence on various aspects of human life. On one hand, it shapes the human axiological or value system, and on the other, it regulates human social relations. In epistemic terms, monotheism cultivates a broad perspective and profound insight in individuals, allowing the peak of divine glory to manifest before them, resulting in humility and existential dependence on God as their Creator. Emotionally, it nurtures and develops feelings, shaping and directing motivations toward the right path—namely, closeness to God. Behaviorally, monotheism imbues all aspects of



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## The Place of Rational Training in Ayatollah Nasserī's View

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### **Abstract**

A key issue in the views of Islamic scholars is whether reason or intellect can influence various individual and social dimensions of life. When it comes to using reason as a means of acquiring knowledge, diverse perspectives have emerged, often contrasting reason with revelation or separating the two. This has sometimes led to the neglect or diminishment of either reason or revelation. This article adopts a descriptive-analytic method to explore rational training from the perspective of Ayatollah Nasserī, a renowned scholar dedicated to spiritual training. His views emphasize the reconciliation of rationality with transmitted textual sources as complementary means of acquiring religious knowledge. This mystical scholar rejects both radical rationalism and anti-rationalism. Examples of rational training in his thought include the articulation of rational principles, reference to reasons, formulation of arguments, enumeration of the advantages and disadvantages of various issues, and the use of reason and knowledge. This research explores rational training in Ayatollah Nasserī's works across three dimensions of rationality: fundamental rationality, exemplified by arguments and proofs such as the miraculous nature of Imam al-Mahdī's long life; value-based rationality, through critiques of flawed insights and methods, and the presentation of moral examples and practical exemplars, particularly concerning the pious; and instrumental rationality, such as his interpretation of verse 41 of Surah al-Hajj, demonstrating his consideration of all three dimensions of rationality.

**Keywords:** Ayatollah Nasserī, rational training, fundamental rationality, axiological rationality, instrumental rationality.

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## Developing a Model for Spiritual Training Based on Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Nasser's Theoretical and Practical Approach

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### **Abstract**

Pedagogical issues are thoroughly addressed in Islamic Sharia, yet society remains largely unaware of them, and the pedagogical and spiritual atmosphere suffers from a crisis. This can be attributed to how ethical, pedagogical, and mystical concepts are presented, as Islamic principles and components offer a systematic, stage-by-stage approach to these matters. Furthermore, in our time, the growing interest in spirituality among the younger generation, alongside the rise of so-called mystical sects, creates a need for a reliable model for spiritual training that truth-seeking individuals can follow. Therefore, this article aims to explore whether a model can be derived from the theoretical and practical teachings of Ayatollah Nasser to address the current gap and offer guidance for truth-seekers. Ayatollah Nasser was an inheritor of the Najaf mystical school. His pedagogical method, rooted in the solid foundations and components drawn from the Quran and the Prophetic tradition, has the potential to address current gaps and serve as a comprehensive model. This research is fundamental in nature, employing a documented approach. Drawing on the pedagogical components of the Najaf mystical school, it utilizes interviews and references to available written works on Ayatollah Nasser's theoretical and mystical teachings, adopting a descriptive-analytic method. Analytically, practically, and structurally, this model outlines the path of servitude toward witnessing the Truth (God), enabling the mystical wayfarer to achieve self-knowledge through outer and inner contemplation and by progressing through stages of sincerity. In doing so, the wayfarer attains monotheism in actions, attributes, and essence, culminating in the stage of the pure and the purified.

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**Keywords:** model, training, spiritual training, theoretical and practical teachings, Najaf mystical school, Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Nasser.

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## The Meaning and Moral Value of Theoretical Humility: Insights from the Theoretical and Practical Teachings of Ayatollah Nasserī

Mohammad Taghi Eslami<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Philosophers like Spinoza, Kant, and Nietzsche reject the moral value of humility altogether, much less consider it a virtue. In their view, human qualities such as power, creativity, happiness, self-fulfillment, and self-confidence are essential for both theoretical and practical progress. Since humility appears to conflict with these values, they argue it cannot hold positive moral worth. Many ethical schools of thought, particularly religious ones, emphasize humility as a virtue. However, this interpretation of humility's meaning and value has faced renewed scrutiny in the works of certain contemporary authors and within academic circles, leading some scholars to question the value of theoretical humility. This article draws inspiration from the theoretical and practical teachings of the late mystical scholar Ayatollah Hajj Sheikh Mohammad Nasserī Esfehani and employs verbal and semantic content analysis to revisit the meaning and moral value of epistemic and theoretical humility. It approaches the topic with an inquisitive mind, considering critiques and negative views on the positive value of humility, and explores new perspectives on the concept and its virtue.


**Keywords:** ethics, moral value, virtue, humility, modesty, theoretical humility, Ayatollah Nasserī Esfehani.



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of awaiting the savior, while nurturing talented souls in the practice of servile spiritual wayfaring. His thought is centered on two key concerns: the refinement of the soul and ethical self-development, alongside the expansion of Imam al-Mahdī's love within the community of those awaiting the savior. This approach resulted in a continuum that begins with the ethics of awaiting and extends to the practice of servile wayfaring. Using the method of textual exegesis, this article addresses the model of mystical wayfaring during the Age of Occultation, as outlined by the Imamate theory.

**Keywords:** ethics of awaiting the savior, Shiite mysticism, the living Imam, inner guardianship, servile wayfaring.



## Ethics of Awaiting the Savior and Servile Wayfaring: Ayatollah Nasserī's Perspective

Mahdi Alizadeh<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Contrary to secular theories of ethics, religious ethical systems—particularly in Islam—involve a spiritual dimension. Islamic ethics is inherently spiritual. Within the Shiite doctrinal framework, the Imami ethical system is shaped by the belief in the existence of God's living proof (Imam). The infallible living Imam embodies and manifests all divine names. In the realm of God's existential will, the perfect man serves as the conduit of divine grace; and in the realm of God's legislative will, due to the perfect man's annihilation in God and his status as the full-fledged successor of God, his will is God's will, his command is God's command, and his word is the medium through which divine orders flow. A true servant and awaiter, who has disciplined his soul through commitment to the duties of awaiting and upholding his master's ethical rights, moves in alignment with the Imam's satisfaction, believing that the criterion of right and wrong in his actions, and good and bad in his intentions, is the pleasure of God's living Imam. A true servant and sincere awaiter embarks on a humble journey of servitude toward the sacred sanctity of divine closeness. In the arduous path of spiritual wayfaring, the wayfarer seeks guidance from a sure guide, who is a Perfect Man, to understand both the facilitators and obstacles on the path. To free himself from distractions and dispersions, he imprints the greatest divine face upon the tablet of his heart. To secure the necessary motivation for traversing these difficult stages through his existential connection with the Imam, he seeks assistance from God's greatest friend. A loving servant, enamored with the manifestation of God's beauty, lets the fire of this love burn away the roots of vice within him, freeing him from dark veils and raising him to the sanctity of God. In our time, the esteemed jurist and spiritual guide Ayatollah Nasser dedicated his blessed life to promoting a discourse on the manners and ethics

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