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Conclusion

The Martyrdom or Passing Away of Imam al-Mahdi ('atfs)

Different *hadiths* exist regarding the martyrdom or passing away of Imam al-Mahdi ('atfs), but because Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba ('a) has said, "Each one of us Imams will either be poisoned or martyred," the *hadiths* that indicate the Imam's martyrdom can have preponderance over others that say otherwise.

Here, it will suffice to examine only a few pertinent *hadiths*.

Concerning the noble Qur'anic verse, "*Then We gave you back the turn (to prevail) over them,*"¹ Imam as-Sadiq ('a) said: "It means the revival of Imam al-Husayn ('a) and seventy of his companions during the period of the Imam of the Time wearing golden helmets. The return (*raj'ah*) and revival of Hadrat al-Husayn ('a) will be announced by them to the people so that the believers would not entertain doubt and skepticism.

This will occur while Hadrat al-Hujjah ('atfs) will be among the people. When knowledge and faith in him will be well-embedded in their hearts, the demise of Hadrat Hujjah will come. Then, Hadrat Imam al-Husayn ('a) will take charge of his *ghusl* (ritual bath for the dead), his shrouding (*kafn*), embalment (*hunut*), and burial. A non-*wasiyy* (executor of will) will never prepare the burial of a *wasiyy*."²

Zuhri said: "Hadrat al-Mahdi ('atfs) will live for fourteen years and then he will meet the Lord by natural death."³

Artah said: "It has been narrated to me that Hadrat al-Mahdi ('atfs) will live for forty years. Then, he will die a natural death on his bed."⁴

Ka'b al-Ahbar⁵ said: "The victor (*mansur*) of this *ummah* is al-Mahdi, and the inhabitants of the earth and the birds in the sky send salutations to him.

"It is he who will be tested in the war with Rome and other great battles. This test will take twenty years. Along with two thousand of his standard-bearing commanders he will attain martyrdom. Afterward, there

will be no tragedy more painful than the martyrdom of Hadrat al-Mahdi (*'atfs*) after the tragedy of the demise of the Messenger of Allah (S).”⁶

Of course, in my opinion, the statements of Zuhri, Artah and Ka'b are unreliable unless the opposite is proved.

The Manner of the Martrdom of Imam al-Mahdi (*'atfs*)

Regarding the manner of the martyrdom of Imam al-Mahdi (*'atfs*), it has been stated in *Ilzam an-Nasib*, thus: “When his seventieth year comes to an end and his death is about to take place, a woman named Sa'idah from the tribe of Bani Tamim will martyr him. The salient feature of that woman is that she would have a beard like a man.

“When the Imam is passing by, she will throw a stone from a rooftop upon him and he will attain martyrdom. After he passes away, Imam al-Husayn (*'a*) will perform the rites of his *ghusl*, *kafn* and burial.”⁷

Of course, with the exception of this book, I have not found this subject written anywhere else, i.e. the manner of martyrdom of the Imam.

Imam as-Sadiq (*'a*) said: “Husayn (*'a*), along with his companions who were martyred with him, will come⁸ and seventy prophets will accompany them just as Hadrat Musa was accompanied by seventy dispatched persons. Then, Hadrat al-Qa'im (*'atfs*) will turn over his ring to him. Imam al-Husayn will perform Hadrat al-Qa'im's *ghusl*, *kafn*, *hunut*, and burial.”

*May peace be upon him on the day he was born, the day he will appear,
the day he will die, and the day he will be raised up to life again!*

1. Surah al-Isra' (or Bani Isra'il) 17:6.

2. Al-Kafi, vol. 8, p. 206; Ta'wil al-Ayat az-Zahirah, vol. 1, p. 278; vol. 2, p. 762; Mukhtasar al-Basa'ir, p. 48; Tafsir Burhan, vol. 2, p. 401; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 53, p. 13; vol. 51, p. 56.

3. Ibn Hammad, Fitan, p. 104; Al-Bada' wa't-Tarikh, vol. 2, p. 184; Muttaqi Hindi, Burhan, p. 163.

4. Ibn Hammad, Fitan, p. 99; 'Aqd ad-Durar, p. 147; Muttaqi Hindi, Burhan, p. 157.

5. It is to be noted that according to the scholars of 'ilm ar-rijal (science concerned with the study of hadith chain of transmitters), Ka'b al-Ahbar is a known liar. The Imams from the Progeny of the Prophet (*'a*) did not accept his hadiths. See, for example, Muhammad Jawad Chirri, *The Shi'ites Under Attack* (Detroit: The Islamic Center of America, 1986), “Did Muslims other than Shi'ites Borrow Religious Teachings from Jews?”, pp. 62-75, available online at: <http://www.al-islam.org/the-shiites-under-attack-muhammad-jawad-chirri> [1]. (Trans.)

6. Iqd ad-Durar, p. 149.

7. *Ilzam an-Nasib*, p. 190; *Tarikh-e Ma Ba'da'z-Zuhur*, p. 881.

8. For information on the return (*raj'ah*) of Imam al-Husayn (*'a*), see the book, *Setareh-ye Derakhshan* (Bright Star), by my father, the late Ayatullah Tabasi.

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