

THE SECRET BIRTH OF HADHRAT MAHDI (A. S)

Shaykh Mufid, a distinguished Shi'ite scholar, also wrote in al Irshad: " When Imam Hasan al' Askari (a. s, passed away, the caliph of that time, pursued his son because the Shi'ite Imamiyyah's belief was famous and was spread about that the Shi'ites were awaiting His Eminence" Mu'tadid, one of the tyrant ' Abbasid caliphs who ruled from 279 to 289 A. H, decided all at once to destroy the entire family of al ' Askari when he heard that more than twenty years had passed since the birth of the son of Imam Hasan al-' Askari (a. s, and that he was still living in spite of the attempts of the preceding caliph to kill him. One of Mu'tadid's officers said: " Mu'tadid has ordered me and two other persons, each of us to mount a horse and to proceed to Samarra' in full speed without even stopping for prayer. He gave us the address of (Imam) al' Askari and instructed us to enter his house without his permission and to bring him the head of whoever we find there" As a matter of fact, they were unaware that the same power which had protected the Imam from the former caliphs would give him protection from his evil, because:

"Allah disdains (nothing) save that He shall perfect His light, however much the disbelievers are averse"

(IX32.)

Indeed what an immature thought and foolish act it was! If the Divine Will bears on some matter, can a person revolt against it and combat it? Is it possible that definite Divine Promises may not be compiled with? Or is it possible that the reins of oppressive imposters who fight against the Divine decree will not cut? Is it not more amazing that Peerless, Almighty Allah has shown His power many times before, so that after that all men should know that if He wishes to give His chosen servant government and sovereignty and to destroy infidelity and irreligiousness through him, then there is no one who can disrupt His rule? Fortunately, this sensational story is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

Pharaoh, the great emperor of Egypt, who had great power and pride, claimed the divinity for himself. He determined to Kill all the youths and boy children of Bani Isra'il as a result of what he had heard about a son being born who would destroy his empire and divinity. He shed the blood of innocents, and banished many persons to unknown regions; but see how Almighty Allah restored His Prophet and how the Divine Will worked to protect the life of Musa(a. s, and destroy Pharaoh:

" And We revealed to the mother of Musa, saying, " Give him suck; and if you fear for him, launch him on the river; and fear not, nor grieve; for We will return him to you and make him one of the Messengers" And took him up Pharaoh's people, that he

might be to them an enemy and a(cause of their) grief,(for) verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners .. So We did restore him to his mother that her age might be refreshed and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is (always) true, but most of them know not.

(XXVIII 7- 13)

Yes, Allah will protect His Proof (Hujjah) and will fulfil His promises and glad tidings because His decision is based on its execution, although most people do not know it. Would Allah wish to save the life of Prophet Musa (a. s, who was only a messenger to a certain nation and tribe, and yield the Imam of the Age (Imam- e-Zamana) into the hands of Mu'tamid and Mu'tadid?

Would Allah protect the life of Musa (a. s) while he was in the middle of the roaring waves of a river, and give no security to the Imam of the Age who was in the house of his father, Imam Hasan al' Askari (a. s? Would the Sustaining Allah of the Prophet Ibrahim (a. s, protect Ibrahim (a. s, in the middle of the flaming fire, but allow the Last Pearl of the Prophet's progeny to be a victim of the lust and anger of the' Abbaside caliphs?

At dawn, on the middle day of Sha'ban in the year 255 A. H, Imam Hasan al Askari (a. s, beheld the heavenly, shining face of his son who was to fulfil all Divine promises and glad tidings. Not more than three days had passed after his birth when the Eleventh Imam took the holy child to his companions and told them:

" After me this will be your master of authority and my successor, and he is the' Support' (al- Qa'im) for whose appearance all people will wait; when the earth is full of injustice and tyranny, he will fill it with peace and justice"

Read carefully these words of Shaykh Mufid,

"Imam Hasan al' Askari, peace be on him, prepared a true Government for his fruitful son. He kept secret the birth of his son and other related matters, because

His Eminence was living in a difficult time when the caliphs were intensively searching for his son and were keeping a close eye on the affairs of Imam al-' Askari. This is because the Shi'ite Imamiyyah belief about the Imam al Mahdi (a. s, had become so current they were waiting for His Eminence. Hence, Imam Hasan al' Askari (a. s, did not show his, and, therefore, the enemies could not recognize Imam al- Mahdi, (a. s, after the demise of His Eminence (father. Although the affairs of Imam al- Mahdi (a. s, were unknown to his enemies and opponents, the sincere Shi'ites gathered the news of this important event. Some of them were informed by Imam al' Askari (a. s,

through a letter. One of the sincere Shi'ites, Ahmad ibn Is'haq, received a letter from the Imam written in his own hand writing, saying: "A son is born to me. Therefore, keep secret the news of it from people and inform only his near relatives and particular friends" Some of the Shi'ites used to pay private visits to Imam al' Askari (a. s, who would take them into the presence of the Twelfth Imam al- Mahdi (a. s, who would guide them. Abu ' Umari and Ahwazi reported: " Abu Muhammad (Imam Hasan al' Askari) showed me his son (the Twelfth Imam) and told me,' This is your Master (Sahib" Some other Shi'ites used to visit Imam al' Askari(a. s, in a group, and if the Imam trusted in them that they would faithfully keep their visit secret, he would show them his beloved son.

Yes, in this manner was the Imam of the Age (Imam- e- Zamana) born and kept

hidden from the reach of strangers. On some occasions only were virtuous Shi'ites allowed to see him, until the year 260 A. H, when the Eleventh Imam expired, and by Divine decree the office of Divine Leadership (Imamate) was vested in the Master of the Authority (Sahibu'l- Amr.)