

A Story of the The Last Words

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The life of our infallible Imams is the most perfect model and should be followed by those who are trying to fulfill the purpose of their creation.

Regarding this fact, in the following article, a story of the lifestyle of Imam al-Sadiq has been offered.

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For many years I had been serving in the house of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, and had been a companion of Umma Hamidah, wife of the Imam. I had shared the joys and sorrows of that noble family. In many matters it was I who made a decision. I always managed the affairs of the house quietly. But on that day I felt different. I had lost my usual calmness, and I found it hard to make a decision. I occupied myself with this and that, and kept on looking at the door, waiting for the relatives of the Imam to arrive.

On that day the call for the evening prayer had not been performed when Umm Hamidah hurriedly came out of the room and said: "Salama, send someone round to fetch all the relatives of the Imam here. The Imam has ordered that they should all gather here. He wants to divulge his last words to his relatives."

I realized from Umm Hamidah's words that, it was the last night of Imam al-Sadiq. A great sorrow sat on my heart. I wished not to leave the Imam's consort in those critical moments, not even to stay away from the Imam for one moment. But I had to carry out the Imam's order and find those persons to assemble in his house. I assigned a few people to fetch the relatives of the Imam. They left quickly and I returned to the side of the Imam and sat by Umma Hamidah. Imam al-Sadiq was lying down in bed. Some days before, the Imam had been poisoned by the order of Mansur, the caliph of the time. The effect of the poison gradually appeared, and now the Imam was confined to bed. Mansur was an enemy of the Imam. He had many times plotted against the life of the Imam, but he had failed in every case. However, this time Mansur's

plan had been carried out, and the Imam was poisoned. It was painful for me, to see his weakened and suffering face. Umm Hamidah was gazing at that pale and suffering face and quietly shedding tears. The Imam's lips were moving as if he wanted to say something. I thought that he intended to utter his last words in the presence of his relatives, but none of them had yet arrived. O' God! Let him not die before their arrival!

Suddenly I thought of Abu Nasr who was one of the loyal friends of the Imam. He was one of those who always noted down the words of Imam and repeated them for others. I thought it advisable that Abu Nasr, too, should be present at the last moments of Imam's life, and hear his last words. He would be the only person who could help Imam al-Sadiq. No one was in the house, for, I had sent everyone away to find the Imam's relatives. I didn't know what to do. Abu Nasr's house was very far away. I had to seek him out myself but I feared that the Imam would be dead by the time I returned, and I would miss being by his side during his last moments.

I was completely perplexed; suddenly I heard a knock on the door. I hurried to the door and found there a pupil of the Imam who had come to see how he was. I told him that the Imam was not well, and that night was probably his last night. He sat down by the door and started weeping.

He used to visit the Imam every day. I explained my problem to him, and he rose and said: "You had better stay with Umma Hamidah. I will go and find Abu Nasr."

I thanked God, and thanked him; and returned to the room. The Imam was still sleeping. Umma Hamidah was sitting by his side and weeping. He looked very pale and thin; He was sixty- five years old, I had never seen him so pale and thin.

Soon afterwards some of his relatives arrived, one by one, but not all of them. Each one, on entering, saluted and sat by the Imam's bed. Everyone gazed in silence at his face.

Suddenly he slowly opened his eyes. Umma Hamidah moved slightly and put her face closer to the Imam. He turned his head round with some difficulty and looked at those who were present, maybe to see if all had come, but they had not. Others were expected to arrive. The Imam closed his eyes again. One of those present began to cry. Imam al-Sadiq again opened his eyes and everyone looked at him. He smiled affectionately and said: "Why do you cry?" The man answered: "Why should I not? May God destroy the enemies of Islam! Could I see you in this condition and not cry?"

The Imam remained silent for a moment and then said: "No! Don't cry! Whatever happens to a believer is good, and even if all his limbs are cut off, it is good for him, or if he owns everything on the earth, again it is good for him."

What fine words! O' God! Let not these words be his last! For, not all his relatives are here yet. He closed his eyes again for some moments: and then said: "Remember to give my cousin Hasan Ibn Ali seventy coins of my money."

I felt as if the whole room was turning round and round. I almost collapsed. I knew Hasan Ibn Ali well. He was an enemy of the Imam. I could bear it no more and said: "He is your enemy. He is the man who attacked you with a dagger to kill you. Do you want to give him some of your money?"

The Imam smiled faintly and said: "God loves those who help their relations. Do you not want to be one of those who are spoken well of by God?"

Oh! How noble Imam al-Sadiq was! At that moment the door opened and two others entered. One of them was a relative of the Imam. The other one was the same pupil of the Imam who had gone to find Abu Nasr. I went quickly to him and asked about Abu Nasr. He answered: “Abu Nasr was not at home. I sent a member of his family to find and send him here.”

I began to think and wish that Abu Nasr would arrive soon. I wished that he were there to write down the words of the Imam. The relatives continued to arrive one by one. Now almost everybody was there, sitting round the Imam's bed, and weeping quietly, and waiting to hear his last words.

These were painful moments, and they passed unpleasantly. Once more the Imam opened his eyes and shifted himself a little in bed. Then he looked round at everyone, remained silent for a moment and said: “He who pays no attention to daily ritual prayers and takes them lightly, will not benefit from our intercession.”

I did not know then whether those were the last words of the Imam. He always advised us to take the daily ritual prayers and perform them on time. Now in his last moments, he was again making the same recommendation, saying that on the Day of Resurrection he would not help those who pay no attention to the daily prayers. The heart-rending cry of Umma Hamidah broke the thread of my thoughts. The Imam had passed away. Everyone started wailing. I began crying too while still thinking about the last words of the Imam, recommending everyone to pay attention to the daily ritual prayers.

The holy body of the Imam was carried by his relatives and friends to the Baghi'e cemetery, and buried beside the tombs of his ancestors Imam Hasan, Imam Sajjad and Imam Baqir. That night was the 25th of Shawwal of the year 148 after Hejrat.

Imam Mousa al-Kazim, son of Imam al-Sadiq ordered a lamp to be lit in the room where his father lived every night.

The relatives and followers of the Imam returned, and Abu Nasr, too, arrived in a confused state of mind while weeping. He went to Umma Hamidah and offered his condolences. Umma Hamidah said in answer: "Alas you were not present at the Imam's death! I wish you had come sooner. The last words recommended the Muslims to pay attention to the daily ritual prayers, namely something which he had repeatedly emphasized during the thirty- four years of his imamate."

The house was silent, and only the sound of lamentation of the relatives of the Imam could be heard. There was no other light but the one which had been lit in his room.