

Imam Hassan Askari (p.b.u.h) was martyred in the year 260 A.H., after living 28 years of his noble life, and after a 6 years period of spiritual leadership in the city of Samerra.

His Holiness had fallen ill in the beginning of Rabi al- Awal of 260 A.H., and after one week of illness he passed away on the 8th of the same month.

Soon after his illness, Obeidollah Ibn Yahyah Ibn Khaghan received this news. It seems that the minister expected this news. He then went to headquarter right away, and by the order of Mutamid, the Abbasid tyranny caliph, he dispatched five secret agents of Caliph to Abu Mohammad's (Imam Hassan Akari) house, and instructed them to stay there and report him whatever was going on. He also instructed Ibn Bakhtiyar; the supreme Judge, to select ten trusted persons and send to Imam's house to watch his condition day and night.¹

Two or three days later, the Caliph was informed that Abu Mohammad felt seriously ill and it did not seem to get better. The Caliph commanded them to stay there in his house, and keep watching until he passes away.

When the news of demise of His Holiness was published, Samerra was sunk in grief and the markets got closed.

Thereon, Caliph sent his brother, Isa Ibn Motevaker to carry out prayer ceremony for the deceased. He then named those who were in his house during the past few days as witness and got ready for prayers ceremony. Holy body of Imam was put down for prayer ceremony; Isa went nearer and uncovered his face to show him to Alavian (Imam's relatives), Abbasids, writers and witnesses and, said:

¹- Alsadr, History of Minor Disappearing, P. 289-290

“This is Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn Mohammad Ibn Reza, who died from disease and natural death.”¹

His Holiness demise in so young age, and the said measures taken by Mutamid clearly proves that Imam Hassan Askari did not die due to, natural causes or a disease.

After his martyrdom (and before the prayer ceremonies), the Shia people and his close friends gathered in his house. Jafar Ibn Ali, the brother of Imam Askari, who was known to have been leading an immoral life, and who had connections with Mutamid's Court, introduced himself as holder of this ceremony and Imam's successor since he was not informed of Mahdi's existence. He therefore, stood in the entrance of the house to receive condolences of Imam's friends who were attending the ceremony.

Abol Adyan, one of Imam's servants, who quoted above news said that Imam Hassan Askari (p.b.u.h) had told him ,

"After my death, the one who carries out my prayer ceremony will be the Imam after me and my successor"

and when I saw Jafar in the entrance of the house, I thought:

"If he is going to be our Imam, surely the sequence of Imamate is annulled, since Jafar is known for using alcoholic drinks, gambling , and..."²

At this time, Aghid, one of the servants of the house of Imam Askari came out and informed Jafar that his brother's body was shrouded and was ready for prayer ceremony. Jafar entered the courtyard of the house. When Jafar was about to start the prayer, a handsome child ,with black hair, came out and drew him aside and said:

¹ Sheikh Mofid, Al Ershad, P.320, and Ibn Sabagh Maleki, Alfousous Al Mohemeh, P.30

² Sadough, Kamal Ul Din, Vol.2, P.150

"Stay back uncle! I am more legitimate to perform the prayer for my father !"

Agitated Jafar then went away and the child performed the prayer ceremony for departed Imam.

Imamat In childhood

Hazrat Mahdi(p.b.u.h) was 4 years and 5 months old in the beginning of his *Imamat* (leadership). This brings up the subject of *Imamat* for more discussion. If *Imamat* is considered and discussed as an ordinary leadership, the question will be raised that, whether a child of this age is capable of undertaking such a great and important responsibility?

The answer is that comparing *Imamat* with an ordinary leadership is absolutely wrong.

However, *Imamat* may be viewed as an extraordinary and innate talent (which is not completely correct); hence it would be said that there have been and still are so many people whose talent and improvement in the childhood and/or in the youth surprised everybody. But if we consider *Imamat* as a ***gifted virtue**, there would be nothing wrong with God's blessing a child with this gift, when his intellectual growth can be an asset and his physical condition will not be a hinder.

Besides, this is not a new phenomenon. It has been experienced before in the history of Islam, and even among the Prophets who came before Islam.

Imamat of the ninth and tenth Imams began when they were 9 and 8 years old respectively. And among the preceding Prophets, Jesus Christ and His Highness John also started their *missions* in their childhood !

"Well companion"

One day wall was spitted; a new born baby came out
A boy, who should have replaced the messenger
The wall of Lord House, a miracle
Nobody had seen such a thing there
He was grown up in the house of messenger
In bravery and manliness, world never would see the better
One of first volunteers joined light religion
Far away horizon was in his vision

T Eye of coy he had, heart of love, hand of generous
And he was gifted with messenger's daughter as wife and bonus
i
m
e Simple nest they had, four children and a door opened

Donated their few dates, even their a loaf of bread
T The woman immigrates soon; jealousies killed her and bought
e the hell

Palms became his companions in black nights and a deep well
T
e One day people turned their back, the other appointed him

Fell on his knees
T He said "so mean this world in my eyes, like a goat sneeze
m
i Their heart was with him; with the enemy was their sword

Left alone him in a war, their excuse was God word
m
k He complained God, cursed them like this

I do hope God take me back from you, you won't see peace
Allies were deprived of his footsteps one black night

Justice Head was spite

Poor left behind years from their right