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Felicitations for the Birth of the Imam of the Time (a.s.)

Manifestation of the Light of the Imam of the Time (a.s.)

The sky and the atmosphere of the world became illuminated by the birth of the great reformer who would once again create the grandeur and bounty of Islam for the people and save them from the darkneses of oppression and transgression.

Among the greatest of bounties of Almighty Allah (SwT) upon His Eminence, Mahdi (a.s.) was that his presence in the womb of his mother and his birth was kept concealed like that of Prophet Musa Ibn Imran (a.s.).

Historians state that Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) invited his aunt, Hakima the daughter of Imam Jawwad (a.s.) to his house, who was an Alawite lady of a very pious character. Her chastity and purity closely resembled that of her honorable grandmother, Fatima Zahra (s.a). When she arrived at the residence of her nephew, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), he welcomed her with utmost respect and said,

“Auntie, be with us today for breaking the fast. Very soon the Almighty Allah (SwT) would gladden you as a result of His Wali and Proof (Hujjat) on the people and my caliph after me.”

The whole being of the exalted lady became surrounded with elation and joy just by hearing these words of the Imam (a.s.) and she said, “O my master and chief! May I be sacrificed on you, from whom would the caliph be born?”

Imam (a.s.) replied, “From Susan (or Narjis).”^{[1](#)}

Her Eminence, Hakima cast a glance at Susan but did not see any sign of pregnancy in her. She turned to Imam (a.s.) and said, “She is not pregnant.” The Imam (a.s.) smiled and said, “The pregnancy would be manifested for you at dawn. Because her pregnancy has not become apparent like that of the mother of Musa (a.s.) and no one could learn about it till the time of delivery. This was so because, the Pharaoh used to have the bellies of expecting ladies cut open so that he could get hold of Musa (a.s.); and this

newborn child is also like His Eminence, Musa (a.s.).”

When the time of evening prayer (Maghrib) arrived, Lady Hakima recited the evening and night prayers. After that she sat down with Lady Susan for breaking the fast. Later she went to sleep. She awoke during the night and glanced at Susan but again saw no sign of pregnancy and childbirth in her.

When the last hours of the night approached she arose and began to perform the Midnight (Shab) Prayer. When she reached the one-unit ‘watr’ prayer, Susan, the chaste lady, woke up from her sleep and also recited the Midnight Prayer. After the prayers she began to feel labor pains. Lady Hakima approached the honorable maid and asked, “Do you feel something?” She replied, “I am feeling a severe thing.”

Lady Hakima addressed her with utmost kindness and respect, “If Allah (SwT) wills, there is no fear for you.” Not much time passed when a beautiful male child was born from the womb of his mother, Susan. The child who would purify the earth from transgressors and oppressors and establish the rule of God over it.

His Eminence, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) was extremely overjoyed at the birth of this blessed and fortunate child and he began to speak up in refutation of the Abbaside rulers that they used to think that they would be able to soon kill him and deprive the Imam (a.s.) from continuing his progeny. He said in this way, “These cruel people thought that they would kill me so that this progeny could be cut off. What an estimation of God’s power they had?”²

Performance of Rituals Connected with the New Birth

Lady Hakima took the newborn child of exalted rank to its honorable father, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) who welcomed him with great pleasure and joy and initiated the Islamic rituals connected with the occasion. In the right ear of the newborn child, the Imam (a.s.) recited the ‘Azan’³ and in his left recited the ‘Iqamat’⁴. Thus the first words to reach his ears were, ‘God is the Greatest’⁵ and, ‘There is no god, except Allah (SwT)’⁶.

In fact, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), by these words fed the child with the secret of existence and the aim of the prophets (a.s.) and it resulted in completely surrounding the heart with kindness, feelings and understanding and at this moment the nascent divine child spoke up, like among the past prophets Isa (a.s.) had done, reciting the following verse from the Holy Quran:

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

“And we desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs...” (Surah 28, Verse 5)

In this way, the Proof of Allah (a.s.) on people and His Guardian (Wali) was born in such a concealed way due to the fear of the oppressive rulers who were in severe pursuit to find and kill him. Lady Hakima took him in her arms, kissed him and said, “I smelt such a sweet fragrance from him as I had never before experienced.”

Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) again took the child from Lady Hakima and said, “I am entrusting you to the one whom Musa’s (a.s.) mother had entrusted, Remain in the care and protection of Allah (SwT).”

Then he said to Lady Hakima, “Auntie take him back to his mother, and keep the report of the birth of this newborn child a secret and do not convey it to anyone till the time is ripe for it...”⁷

Public Feast

After the birth of his blessed child, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) ordered that a large quantity of meat and bread be purchased and distributed among the needy people of Samarra. In this way seventy sheep were slaughtered for his Aqiqa Ceremony from which four were dispatched to his friend, Ibrahim along with the following letter: “In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. These sheep are due to (the birth of) my son, Muhammad Mahdi. Partake it yourself and whomsoever of our Shias you see, make them partake it too.”⁸

Shias Informed of the Birth of the Imam of the Time (a.s.)

The Shias learnt of the birth of the Imam, Proof of Allah upon the people, the Awaited Imam (a.s.), and they were overjoyed upon this news with their whole beings. Among those who received the good tidings was Hamzah, son of Abul Fath. He was told, “Good news! Yesterday, the Almighty Allah (SwT) bestowed, Abu Muhammad, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) with a child, though the holy Imam (a.s.) has ordered that this information be kept confidential.”

Hamzah asked, “What is the name of the child?” He was told, “His name is Muhammad and agnomen, Abu Jafar.”⁹

Felicitations for the Birth of the Imam of the Time (a.s.)

As a result of the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) all the centers and gatherings of Shias were in joy and exultation. Prominent personalities and elders came to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) in groups and congratulated him for the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). One of them, Hasan, the son of Husain Alawi says, “I came to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) in Samarra and complimented him about the birth of his son, Qaim (one who rises).”¹⁰

Not much time elapsed after the birth of the Holy Imam (a.s.) that Shias continued to compliment and congratulate each other for the good news, and poets composed couplets and poems on the festive

occasion expressing their joy. Shaykh Muhammad Samawi says,

“O the night that passed in the birth of that child.

By whom the atmosphere was mesmerized and his fragrance spread all around...”^{[11](#)}

Among those who composed eulogical poems on this occasion was Shaykh Kazim Aale Nuh, the acknowledged and successful literary personality. He writes in a panegyric thus,

“Good news arrived on this great night.

Of the one who is as great as this night.”

- ^{[1.](#)} Bihar, 13/5
- ^{[2.](#)} Bihar, 13/10
- ^{[3.](#)} Call for Prayer
- ^{[4.](#)} Shorter call for prayer
- ^{[5.](#)} Allaho Akbar
- ^{[6.](#)} Laa ilaaha illallaah
- ^{[7.](#)} Bihar, 13/7
- ^{[8.](#)} Bihar, 13/10
- ^{[9.](#)} Bihar, 13/4
- ^{[10.](#)} Bihar, 13/6, Ghaybah, Shaykh Tusi
- ^{[11.](#)} Minanur Rahman, 2/233

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