

## On Pigeons

'Ali b. Sa'id narrated from Muhammad b Karama, who said: I saw a pair of pigeons (*hamam*) in the house of Musa b. Ja'far, peace be upon him. The male was green, with something of brown on it, and the female was black. I saw him [Musa b. Ja'far] crumbling up bread for them while he was at the table, saying: "They move about at night and keep me company. There is not a single tremor they are shaken with at night but that Allah repels by it the spirits that have entered the house."

### **Killing Pigeons**

'Ali b. Sa'id narrated from Muhammad b. Karama from Abu Hamza al-Thumali, who said: My grandson had pigeons and I slaughtered them in anger. Then I went to Mecca and called on Abu Ja'far al-Baqir, peace be upon him, before sunrise. When the sun rose, I saw many pigeons in the house. I asked him [al-Baqir] questions and wrote down his answers to me.

My heart was preoccupied with what I had done in Kufa and my slaughtering the pigeons meaninglessly. I said to myself: Had there been no good in pigeons, he would not have kept them. Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, said to me: "What is the matter with you, O Abu Hamza?" I said: "O son of the Messenger of Allah, I am well." He said: "Your heart is elsewhere." I said: "Yes, by Allah", and narrated the story to him, mentioning that I had slaughtered them, and that now I was surprised at the number of pigeons that he had. Al-Baqir, peace be upon him, said: "Evil is what you have done, O Abu Hamza. Did you not know that when the jinn play with our children, the harm is driven away from them by the fluttering of the pigeons, and that they perform the call to prayer at the end of the night? So give alms of a dinar for each one of them, for you have killed them in anger."