

Section Twenty-Three

The traditions that indicate he is the son of the ‘Master of the Maids’ and the Best of them

Comprised of eleven traditions

572. Sharḥ nahj al-balḡha (by ibn Abī I-ḥadīd) ¹: And from it [i.e. from his sermons some of which have been mentioned by al-Raḥīq]:

Then pay attention to the Ahl al-Bait of your Prophet. If they stay put, then you should also stay put and if they seek your help, then you should help them. Indeed, Allah will remove the fitna through a person from us Ahl al-Bait. May my father be sacrificed for the son of the best of the maids! He will not bestow upon them but swords—with much bloodshed—and he will carry [a sword] on his shoulder for eight months.

The Quraish will say, “Had he been from the descendants of Fāṭima, he would have had mercy on us.” Allah will dispatch him against the Umayyads until he crushes them and breaks them apart: “[They are] cursed (malʿūn); wherever they are found, they will be seized and killed a [horrible] killing. [Such has been] the tradition of Allah amongst those who have passed before and you will not find any change in the traditions of Allah.” ²

573. Yanḥab al-mawadda ³: Al-Madīnī has narrated in al-Ḥiff that after the battle of Nahrawān was over, Amr al-Muʾminīn `Alī, peace be on him, delivered a sermon and mentioned some of the fierce battles [that will occur]. Then, he said:

This is the affair of Allah and it will occur in a joyful time. O Son of the Best of the Maids! Until when will you wait? I give you glad tidings about a help that is near from a Merciful Lord. May my father and mother be sacrificed because [of those] who are few in number! Their names are unknown on earth. Indeed, their appearance is drawing near. There will be a great marvel between [the months of] Jamādī and Rajab because of the gathering of the scattered ones, the harvesting of the crops, and the voices followed by voices. (Then, he said:) Indeed, the decision has already been made (sabaqa al-qaḍīʾu

sabaqa).

[On hearing the above] a person from Baḡra said to a person from Kūfa beside him, “I testify that he is a liar.” The one from Kūfa says, “By Allah, `Alī, peace be on him, had barely descended from the pulpit when the person from Basra became paralyzed and he died the same night.”

The author of Yanḡīb al-mawadda says: “If we wanted to record his predictions about the hidden things whose truth the [people] have clearly witnessed, many volumes would be needed.”

574. Kamāl al-dīn⁴: Aḡmad b. Ziyād b. Ja`far al-Hamdānī, may Allah be satisfied with him, from `Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim, from his father, from Abū Aḡmad Muḡammad b. Ziyād al-Azdī who said:

I asked my master (Imam) Mūsā b. Ja`far, peace be on him, about the saying of Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, “and bestowed upon you His favors both apparent and hidden?”⁵ He replied, “The apparent favor is the apparent Imam and the hidden favor means the hidden Imam.” I asked, “Amongst the Imams, will there be a hidden one?”

He replied, “Yes. His figure will be concealed from the eyes of the people but his memory will not be concealed from the hearts of the believers. He is the twelfth from us. For him, Allah will ease all strains, degrade all difficulties, reveal the treasures of earth, and bring close all the distant things. Through him, He will destroy all oppressive tyrants and annihilate every rebellious devil. He is the son of the Master of the Maids and his birth will be hidden from the people. It will not be permissible for them to say his name until Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, makes him appear. Then, he will fill the earth with fairness and justice just as it will be filled with injustice and unfairness.”

575. Kamāl al-dīn⁶: Narrated to Aḡmad b. `Imrān, may Allah be satisfied with him, from Muḡammad b. `Abd-Allah al-Kūfī, from Mūsā b. `Imrān al-Nakha`ī, from his (paternal) uncle al-ḡusayn b. Yazād al-Naufalī, from al-ḡasan b. `Alī b. Abū ḡamza, from his father, from Abū Baḡḡr, who said:

(Imam) Abū `Abd-Allah (al-ḡḡdiq), peace be on him, said, “Whatever occurred for the prophets, peace be on them, concerning their occultation’s, will also occur for the Qḡ’im from us, in the exact same manner.”⁷ I asked, “O Son of Allah’s Messenger! Who is the Qḡ’im from you Ahl al-Bait?” He answered, “O Abū Baḡḡr! He is the fifth descendant of my son Mūsā; the son of the Master of the maids. He will have an occultation in which the people of falsehood will become skeptical.

Then, Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, will make him appear and Allah will make him conquer the Easts of the earth and its Wests. The Spirit of Allah, Jesus, son of Mary, peace be on him, will descend and pray behind him. The earth will shine with the light of its Lord. There will not remain a part of the earth in which anyone other than Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, is worshipped except that Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, will be worshipped in it. Religion—in its entirety—will be only for Allah even if the polytheists detest it.”

576. Ghaybat al-Nu'mān⁸: Informed us `Abd al-Wā'id b. `Abd-Allah b. Yūnus, from Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Rab' al-Zuhrī, from Aḥmad b. `Alī al-ḥimyarī, from al-ḥakam—the brother of Mushma'il al-Asadī—from `Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qaṣrī who said:

I asked (Imam) Abū Ja'far, peace be on him, “Does the saying of Amr al-Mu'minīn `Alī b. Abī ḥlib, peace be on him, ‘May my father be sacrificed for the son of the Master of the Maids,’ refer to Fāḥima? He responded, “(No,) indeed, Fāḥima, peace be on her, was the best of the free women. Rather, it refers to the one whose stomach is wide and whose complexion is reddish. May Allah have mercy on so and so.”

577. Ghaybat al-Shaykh⁹: Sa'd b. `Abd-Allah, from Muḥammad b. `Ṣs b. `Ubaid, from Ismā'īl b. Abīn, from `Amr b. Shīmr, from Jābir al-Ju'fī, from (Imam) Abū Ja'far, peace be on him, who said:

`Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb asked Amr al-Mu'minīn `Alī, peace be on him, “Inform me about the Mahdī, what is his name?” He replied, “As for his name, then certainly my beloved [i.e. the Messenger of Allah] took a covenant from me that I should not say his name until Allah sends him.” He asked again, “Inform me about his attributes.” He answered, “He is a medium-sized youth and handsome with beautiful hair. His hair flows over his shoulders and the light of his face covers the blackness of his hair and beard; may my father be sacrificed for the son of the Master of the Maids.”

The traditions with the following numbers also show the above concept: 539, 553, 554, 568, and 651.

¹. Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha, vol. 2, p. 179; Yan'ab' al-mawadda, chap. 96, p. 498. Ibn Abī I-ḥadīd writes: “If it is asked, ‘Who from the Umayyads will be present in that time that [‘Alī, peace be on him,] mentions regarding them that so and so and has spoken about this man [i.e. the Mahdī] taking revenge on them to such an extent that they would wish `Alī had ruled over them instead of him?’ The answer is: The Imāmiyya (Shias) believe in the raj'a and think that when their awaited Imam returns, a group from the highest ranking Umayyads will be resurrected from their graves. From them, he will cut the hands and feet of a group, take out the eyes of others, and crucify some of them and thus take revenge from the enemies of the family of Muḥammad—both the early ones and the latter ones.”

Then, ibn Abī I-ḥadīd answers what has been questioned about the beliefs of his companions—after explaining that the Mahdī, peace be on him, is from the descendants of Fāḥima and will fill the earth with fairness and justice just as it will be filled with unfairness and injustice. That he will take revenge on the oppressors and will punish them using the severest of punishments and that he is the sole child of his mother, as has been mentioned in this and other traditions, and that his name is Muḥammad, etc. — by stating that he will appear after most of Islam will be dominated by a person from the Umayyads and he is none other than the Sufyānī who has been spoken about in a reliable tradition and who is a descendant of Abū Sufyān b. ḥarb b. Umayya. The Fa'imī Imam will kill him and his followers who are from the Umayyads and other (groups), after which Jesus will descend from the sky, the conditions of the Hour will become apparent, and the Creature of the Earth (dabbat al-arḍ) will emerge, etc . . .”; Ghaybat al-Nu'mān, chap. 13, p. 229, no. 11, and similar to it in Biḥār al-anwār, vol. 51, p. 121, under no. 23.

². Quran 33:61–62.

³. Yan'ab' al-mawadda, chap. 99, p. 512.

⁴. Kamāl al-dīn, vol. 2, chap. 34, pp. 368–369, no. 6; Kifāyat al-athar, chap. “What has been narrated from Mūsā b. Ja'far, peace be on him,” p. 266, no. 3, from Muḥammad b. `Abd-Allah b. ḥamza, from his (paternal) uncle al-ḥasan b. ḥamza, from `Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Ḥshīm; Biḥār al-anwār, vol. 51, chap. 7, pp. 150–151, no. 2.

⁵. Quran 31:20.

6. Kamāl al-dīn, vol. 2, pp. 345–346, no. 31.

7. Al-Ḥakīm has recorded in al-Mustadrak, “Kitāb al-ḥimn,” vol. 1, p. 37, through his chain of narrators from Abū Huraira that the Messenger of Allah, Allah’s blessings be on him and his family, said: “You will certainly follow the customs (sunan) of those before you identically and similar in every manner, to an extent that even if they have entered the hole of a lizard you will certainly enter it with them.” He was asked, “O Messenger of Allah! (Do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?” He replied, “Who else (do I mean).”

Al-Ḥakīm says: “This tradition is correct (ṣaḥīḥ) according to the criteria set by Muslim but neither of them [i.e. al-Bukhārī and Muslim] have recorded it with this wording.”

I say: This tradition has been narrated in the books of both sects with different wordings.

8. Ghaybat al-Nuḥmānī, chap. 13, pp. 228–229, no. 9.

9. Ghaybat al-Shaykh, p. 281, no. 5; Biṣṣat al-anwār, vol. 51, chap. 4, p. 36, no. 6, citing al-Nuḥmānī and al-Shaykh; Kamāl al-dīn, vol. 2, chap. 56, p. 468, no. 3. He has recorded the beginning of the tradition with some variations in the wording; Iḥṣām al-warā, p. 434; al-Kharāj, vol. 3, p. 1152 (short version); al-Irshād by al-Mufīd, p. 363; Kashf al-ghumma, vol. 2, p. 464; Rauḥat al-wafā, vol. 2, p. 266; Ithbāt al-hudūd, vol. 3, chap. 34, sect. 6, p. 730, no. 71. Know that there is no contradiction between this tradition and numerous other traditions that mention his longevity. We can reconcile between these by saying that such a tradition points to the brightness of his color and his handsome looks and that he will appear young and energetic and his face will not age with the passing of days.

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