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Lesson 28: The Eleventh Imam And The Thirteenth Infallible Figure. Imam Hasan 'Askari

He was born on Rabi' ath-Thani 6, 232 in Medina. His father was Imam 'Ali Naqi and his mother was Salil who was the epitome of piety and devoutness. He attained leadership at 22. And like his forbears, he was poisoned to death by tyrants in 250 at the age of 28. He was buried in Samarra next to his dignified father's tomb.

He was four years old when he came from Medina to Iraq along with his father. He settled in Samarra, which is one of the cities of Iraq and he was scrutinized by the regime and was occasionally imprisoned and most of the time, he was banned from meeting people.

Isa ibn Sabih says, "When I was serving at prison, Imam Hasan 'Asqari was also brought to the prison. I took advantage of his company and at times, he made miraculous predictions from unknown. For example, one day he told me, 'You're sixty five years and odd month and odd days old. When I consulted my date of birth, I realized that he had told my birthday and my age exactly.'"[1]

Abu Hashim Ja'fari says, "When I was afflicted by destitution and indigence, I wanted to seek help from Imam Hasan 'Asqari but I was ashamed. When I went home, I learned that Imam Hasan 'Asqari had sent someone to my house with some money and had written a letter saying, 'whenever you are in need, ask us and do not be ashamed.'"[2]

Muntasar Billah, an 'Abbasi ruler, went to Samarra and paid tribute to the tombs of Imam 'Ali Naqi and Imam Hasan 'Asqari ('a) and left there for the tombs of the 'Abbasi rulers. They were located in a filthy, ruined and squalid neighborhood.

One of his companions told him, "You are the ruler of this country and you enjoy power and means, then why should the graves of your forbears be in such a state, that no one ever visits them and they don't have any attendants and caretakers to keep them clean and maintain them while you see that the tombs of the progeny of 'Ali ('a) (the tombs of 'Ali Naqi and Imam 'Asqari) are so tidy and clean and are

decorated with carpets and curtains and lights.

Muntasar, with genuine frankness, expressed a fact and said, “This is a heavenly occurrence and is done by God, and even if we force people to honor and venerate the tombs of our family, this could not be practical, that is, people love them (the progeny of ‘Ali (‘a)) from the bottom of their hearts and revere them both when they are living and after their deaths but they don’t like us, and while we are living respect us out of fear but as soon as we die, they won’t pay attention to us, and in sum, we cannot arouse affection and devotion and conviction by force.”[3]

Some Remarks by the Imam

The most pious are those who avoid dubious acts (which might be forbidden) and the most devoted (faithful) are those who fully fulfill their obligations and duties and the most devout are those who abstain from the forbidden and wrongdoing.

Exercise piety and conduct yourself in a way that when people realize that you are one of our followers, you may bring credit to us, and not obloquy and ignominy upon us.[4]

1. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 50, p. 275.
2. Kashf al-Ghummah, vol. 3, p. 287.
3. Kashf al- Ghummah, vol. 3, p. 437.
4. Tuhaf al-‘Uqul, p. 488.

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