

Extract from Book Nuqoosh Ismat
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Life Sketch of Imam Ali Naqi Hadi (a.s.)

It was 5th Rajab, 214 A.H. when another carrier of divine effulgence appeared in the house of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) and Providence sent the tenth successor of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) to this world.¹

During that time, life of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) was passing in great hardships. After the martyrdom of Imam Ali Reza (a.s.), Mamun had summoned him from Medina to Baghdad and married his daughter to him to protect his rule. In this way, the family life was also troubled in addition to external troubles that he faced. On one hand was the simplicity and piety of Imamate and on the other hand was the royal life of the woman he had married, who had never ever seen true Islamic atmosphere. Thus his family life was full of discomfort and trouble.

Imam (a.s.) solved this problem within year when he left the affluent house of Mamun and decided to move from Baghdad and reside in Medina. But the same trouble accompanied him there, and Ummul Fadhl, in addition of harassing the Imam, wrote continuous letters of complaint to her father and continued to instigate the ruler against Imam till Providence persuaded the Imam to take a second wife in order to continue Imamate. He married Sumana Maghribiyya. As soon as he married, there was chaos in the house and Ummul Fadhl raised a great fracas: she complained to her father and relatives and continued to create mischief in the regime to harm the Imam. Imam (a.s.) paid not attention to these mischiefs and continued with his mission. He never accorded preference to

¹ *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 139; *Damatus Sakiba*, Pg. 130

the princess over the ordinary ladies of the house as anyone who has lived through such circumstances knows this well. Providence soon gave Lady Sumana a male child and this worsened the situation further. As if childlessness, simplicity and presence of a co-wife were not enough, Ummul Fadhl also had to witness that his co-wife had become a mother.

In Islamic history rivalry of a childless woman with a lady with issues is ancient and even great ladies could not remain safe from it, whereas Ummul Fadhl didn't even have any distinction and neither has the Muslim world derived its one-third religion from her. The consequences were obvious, but when Providence wants something, there is nothing which comes in the way and Musa (a.s.) was born inspite of all care that Firon had taken. Thus Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) began his life in a strange atmosphere of jealousy.¹

- His mother was Sumana Maghribiyya, who was definitely from non-Arab descent and that is why Arabs were not prepared to accord her the position, which belongs to the Arabs and behaved with others like slaves and maids. However from the aspect of character, she was superior to all the ladies of her time and that is why the Holy Imams (a.s.), inspite of being from the most noble stock of Arabs married non-Arabs to defeat Arab pride in descent and to end the difference between Arabs and non-Arabs. And the importance of faith and character in Islam should also become clear. The least praise of Lady Sumana is that she used to observe fasts the whole year and there is great excellence of this in traditional reports. In some traditions, it is mentioned that if one cannot fast for all days one should keep three fasts every month and they would be counted as thirty fasts. But it is clear that is a cure for helplessness and not a formula for cunning and laziness. So those are capable should instead of using tricks take

¹ *Sawaneh Muhammad Taqi*, Vol. 2, Pg. 11

recourse to deeds and then they should take the help of sincerity for acceptance of deeds so that the deed is accepted by Allah.¹

It is necessary to clarify about *Yamue Dahar* fasts that during this period, the days in which Shariah has prohibited fasting is exempted and in those days in which Islam has prohibited fasting, because in Islam the foundation of deeds is worship and not habit; if divine command is related to the deed, it is worship to perform that deed and if command of God is to leave that act, leaving of the act is worship of the creator and servitude to God. There is no scope of interference of any customs or personal feelings and neither is the deed related to the praise or criticism of God. Worship is worth praise in the view of Lordship and in that there is no importance of the view of man.²

- His name was Ali and his titles were Najib, Murtada, Aalim, Faqih, Nasih, Amin, Motamin, Tayyib, Naqi and Hadi etc. Some traditions have also mentioned Mutawakkil as one of his titles, but he prohibited his companions from addressing him with this title as this could be taken as an excuse by the tyrant ruler to take revenge or his character would become doubtful to ordinary people and they would begin to imagine every Mutawakkil to be having the same character.³
- He is also referred to as Askari, because of his residence in the locality of Askar and his illustrious son is also called by this title; on the contrary his most famous title is Askari; because he had more connection with this locality and in this way both Imams together are referred to as ‘Askariain’

¹ *Irshad Mufeed*, Pg. 358

² *Jannaatul Khulud*

³ *Elaamul Wara*, Pg. 225; *Matalibus So-ool*, Pg. 291; *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 149; *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 122; *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 239

(Arabic for two Askaris) just as Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and Imam Jawad (a.s.) are called as Kazmain and Jawwadain.¹

- He was born at Surayya, at some distance from Medina, where Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) used to stay often and perhaps he had lodged Lady Sumana there in order to avoid domestic tension and Providence bestowed him with a son.²
- His Kunniyat was Abul Hasan, the third, because before that Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and Imam Ali Reza (a.s.) were called as thus and in some traditional reports he is also referred to as Abul Hasan Madhi.³

When he was born, Mamun was on the throne; after that in 218 A.H. Mutasim assumed power; in 227 A.H. Wathiq succeeded to the throne; Wathiq died in 232 A.H. and the kingdom came under control of Mutawakkil and he remained in power till 247 A.H. After that his three sons ruled one after the other. Muntasir Ibne Mutawakkil came to power in 247 A.H.; Mustaeen Ibne Mutawakkil in 248 A.H. and Motaz Ibne Mutawakkil in 252 A.H. Motaz has the Imam martyred through poison in 254 A.H.⁴

Of all these tyrants, the worst was Mutawakkil. He is also called as Yazid of Bani Abbas. Such was his faithlessness and licentiousness that he had four thousand slave girls in his palace and all were at his disposal. He drank wine without any restraint and was such a cruel fellow that he shed the blood of not hundreds and thousands; but hundreds of thousands of believers and Saadaat. He asked a litterateur like Ibne Sikkit: Whether my sons are better or Hasan and Husain? Ibne Sikkit

¹ *Muntahiul Aamaal*

² *Irshad Mufeed*, Pg. 494; *Biharul Anwar*

³ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 239

⁴ *Abul Fida; Damatus Sakiba*, Pg. 121; *Tadkiratul Masoomeen; Elamul Wara*, Pg. 339

said without any hesitation: Leave alone Hasan and Husain, your sons cannot be compared to their slave, Qambar. As a result of this he had his tongue pulled out from the back of his head, although he was considered to be the most influential person in the court. It was Mutawakkil only who had begun the job of eradicating the signs of the tomb of Imam Husain (a.s.) in which, by the grace of God he could not succeed. A poet has aptly said:¹

Come and see O Mutawakkil, the tomb of Husain.

The land rose up and the water took a detour by itself.

- The Imam was very young in age when Motasimbillah summoned his respected father from Medina to Baghdad in 219 A.H. and he was separated from his father after which they never met. Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) reached Baghdad on 9th Mohurram in 220 A.H. and the tyrant had him martyred on 29th Zilqad of the same year.²

Since the Imam was unable to be trained under his father, some people became sympathetic to him and Umar Ibne Farrah appointed Ubaidullah Junaidi as his teacher; but after some days when he asked Junaidi about the progress of the child, he said: People think that I am his teacher; by Allah, I learn from him and his knowledge and excellence is much more than mine. By God, he is the best of all.³

Knowledge and perfections

- Thiqatul Islam Kulaini narrates that Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) said to Naufali that Almighty Allah has 73 Great names, of which one was bestowed to Asif Ibne Barkhiya

¹ *Tarikh Khulafa*, Suyuti; *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 282; *Abul Fida*, Vol. 2, Pg. 14; *Tarikh Islam*, Pg. 65

² *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 147

³ *Isbatul Wasiyya*, *Damatus Sakiba*, Pg, 121

through which he brought the throne of Bilqis from Saba Kingdom to Sulaiman (a.s.) in the blink of the eye. We are bestowed 72 names from them; so no one can have any idea about our power and the Lord of the worlds has concealed a name from us also as it is the specialty of his lordship.

We should know that knowledge is supposed to make discoveries and it is not related to power; but by referring to the throne of Bilqis, Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) has implied that knowledge of the Great names is not limited to exposition of realities; a kind of power is also found in it through which the earth can be folded up; thus if one Great name could have such power, what would be the condition of 72 Great names and how great would be the power, which is 72 times that of Asif Ibne Barkhiya?¹

- In 227 A.H. when the Imam was twelve or thirteen years old, he was standing at the roadside with Abu Hashim, when Turk soldiers passed from there. The Imam began to talk with one of them in Turkish; he was absolutely amazed and he fell at the Imam's feet and said: No one other than my father is aware of the name with which you have addressed me. It means that you are a holy saint.²
- In another report of Abu Hashim: One day, the Imam began to speak Hindi and I said: Maula, I don't understand this language at all. He picked up a pebble and applied saliva to it; when I placed it on my tongue I became proficient in seventy languages.³

It is obvious that when such is the effect of the saliva of Imamate what would be the effect of saliva of prophethood and

¹ *Damatus Sakiba*, Pg. 126; *Manaqib*, Vol. 5, Pg. 118; *Usul Kafi*

² *Elaamul Wara*, Pg. 243; *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap. 3, Pg. 131

³ *Elaamul Wara*, Pg. 243; *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap. 3, Pg. 126; *Mukhtarul Kharaij wal Jaraih*, Pg. 237

when such effect is found in saliva, which is considered to be an extra moisture of the body, what would be the effect of blood, which is the real part of the body and an element of life. Only after realizing this matter can the following statement of the Prophet be explained: The blood of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) is my blood and their flesh and skin is my flesh and skin.

- Shaykh Tusi writes in *Misbah*: Ishaq bin Abdullah came to the Imam to issue judgment about a discussion and as soon as the Imam saw him, he said: If you want your uncle to judge the discussion, you should know that there are four important fasts in the year: 17th Rabiul Awwal, day of birth of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.); 27th Rajab, day of proclamation of prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.); 25th Zilqad, day of Dahwul Ardh, when land was spread out for the first time; 18th Zilhajj, when Islam became complete and blessings were perfected.¹
- Allamah Jami reports that when a follower of Imam complained to him about Qadi of Baghdad he said: There is no need to complain about it as he would automatically be dismissed after two months. And the same happened (as you can run the government with infidelity, but you cannot run it with oppression).²
- When Mutawakkil was poisoned, he made a vow that if he survived, he would donate a huge amount to poor. After regaining health when he asked jurists how much that amounted to, all offered different view without any solid proof. Finally someone took permission to ask Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) about it. He said: He should give 80 dirhams. Mutawakkil asked for reasoning and he said: Almighty Allah helped His Messenger on many occasions

¹ *Manaqib*, Vol. 5, Pg. 123; *Damatus Sakiba*, Pg, 123; *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 245

² *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*

and according to history, they are eighty in all when he confronted the infidels and God helped him.¹

- The king of Rome wrote a letter to the caliph of the time: It is mentioned in Injeel that one who recites a chapter without the following letters: TH-J-KH-Z-SH-Z'-F, would become eligible for Paradise. Please tell us which Surah is that? The Caliph inquired from Muslim scholars, but they were helpless; so he asked the Imam and he said: It is easy; it is Surah Hamd, which does not have these letters; it is because TH stands for *Thabur* (destruction); J is for *Jaheem* (Hell); KH is for *Khaib* and *Khusran* (failure); Z is for *Zaqqum* (bitter fruit); SH is for *Shaqawat* (misfortune); Z' is for *Z'ulmat* (darkness); F is for *Furqat* (separation). Therefore Almighty Allah did not use these letters in this blessed Surah.

We should know that it does not imply that any Surah containing these letters is not a Surah of mercy and blessings, because they are present in Surah Rahman and Surah Dahr, whose main subject is divine blessings; on the contrary it is a special secret that Imam has mentioned and it was known only to the king of Rome and that is why he was satisfied. He accepted Islam and remained a Muslim all his life.²

Seeing such incidents, scholars have pointed to that scientific law that incidents cannot indicate general laws; their specialties are related to them and in presence of specialties, general laws cannot be derived.

- Always, two views have existed in the Muslim world about free will and compulsion. Some people have promoted belief in compulsion so that no blame should fall on them and God should be made responsible for every act. Thus the proverb was publicized that not a leaf moved without

¹ *Manaqib*, Vol. 5, Pg. 116

² *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg, 123; *Sharh Shafiya*, Abu Firass

the command of God, so how can a man move; although two weaknesses are found in this proverb. First of all the Holy Quran has mentioned knowledge of God and not His command. Secondly, a leaf is included in the plant kingdom, which lacks power of contemplation; thus a leaf cannot be compared to man who is bestowed with will, discretion and understanding.

On the other hand fans of great personalities popularized belief in Free will (*Tafweez*) that man is absolutely free in all his actions and God cannot interfere. He has delegated all discretions to man. In the period of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.), also when this question arose, he issued the same judgment that his ancestors had given: That in Islam there is neither compulsion nor free will. On the contrary the matter is between the two (*Amr bainal Amrain*). Discretions are given by God but responsibility of deeds lies on human beings. Neither can he become needless of divine discretions nor God be held responsible for use of this discretion by man.¹

- In 232 A.H., when the Imam was around twenty years old, an Asbati man from Iraq came to Medina and met the Imam. He asked about his ruler, Wathiq and he said that he was all right. Then he asked about Ibne Zayyat. He said that nowadays he was in charge of complete administration and he was living in prosperity. Imam (a.s.) said: Your information is obsolete. Wathiq has died; Mutawakkil has come to the throne and he has eliminated Ibne Zayyat. Asbati asked in bewilderment: When did it all happen? Imam (a.s.) said: Six days after you left Iraq. After some days these facts were verified and unseen knowledge of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) was confirmed.²

¹ *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg. 134

² *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 149, Egypt; *Irshad Mufeed*, Pg. 209; *Manaqib*, Vol. 4, Pg. 410

Miracles

- Muhammad Ibne Faraj says that Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) wrote to me that I should pack my belongings and prepare the arms I was confused what the Imam could mean. After some days, the Egyptian police apprehended and placed me under arrest and confiscated all my property. I remained in prison for eight years. One day, I received a letter from the Holy Imam (a.s.): Beware, do not go to the West. I was bewildered that I was in jail; how can I go to west or east? After some days, I was released from the prison and I wrote to the Imam to pray that my property is restored to me and it happened thus.¹
- Ali Ibnul Hasib says: I was walking along with the Holy Imam (a.s.) and by chance I overtook the Imam and asked him also to increase the pace. He said: You have to go ahead of me. Thus it happened that he died after some days.²
- Abu Ayyub wrote to Imam (a.s.) that his wife was pregnant and requested him to pray that he may get a son. Imam as said: A son would be born to you, but you should name him Muhammad; he did as advised. In this way became clear the aim of Aale Muhammad (a.s.) to keep alive the name of the Prophet.³
- Yahya Ibne Zakariya wrote that his wife was also expecting and that the Imam should pray similarly for him. Imam (a.s.) said: Many girls are better than boys. Thus Imam (a.s.) revealed the sex of the unborn child and rejected the un-Islamic belief that boys are superior. If it had been so,

¹ *Irshad Mufeed*, Pg. 311; *Kafi*, Vol. 1, Pg. 500; *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap. 3, Pg. 136

² *Kashful Ghummah*

³ *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap. 3, Pg. 142; *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 247

Almighty Allah would have given only sons to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and would have multiplied his generations through males. It was the same reply that Almighty Allah had given to the mother of Lady Maryam.¹

- Abu Hashim said: I mentioned my precarious economical condition and requested him for monetary assistance. Imam (a.s.) gave me a handful of sand and said: Sell it and use the money. When he looked at the sand it had turned to gold and a miracle like that of Imam Ali (a.s.) was again displayed.²
- Abu Hashim says: When Imam (a.s.) came to Samarrah I said to him with utmost respect: I live in Baghdad, I cannot visit you everyday. My beast of burden is also weak. Imam (a.s.) said: Almighty Allah would make your beast strong. As a result of this I used to pray the Morning Prayer in Baghdad, Noon Prayer in Samarrah and Maghrib and Isha Prayer in Baghdad, whereas there is a distance of more than a hundred miles between these two places.³
- Allamah Shaykh Abbas Qummi says: The ruler wanted to show off his power to the Imam and he had a mound prepared in the desert and ordered the whole army to assemble there. When 90000 armed soldiers gathered, he took Imam (a.s.) on that hillock and wanted to show off his power. Imam (a.s.) said: Now look at my power, saying this he passed his hand over the eyes of this ruler. When he looked he saw that as far as the eye could see there were armies from the earth to the sky. He was shocked and he fell down unconscious, Imam brought him into consciousness and said: Don't worry, we Ahle Bayt (a.s.) never use this God-given capability for personal use. And

¹ *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap. 3, Pg. 142; *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 247

² *Manaqib*, Vol. 5, Pg. 119

³ *Elaamul Wara*, Allamah Tabarsi, Pg. 208

neither do we take any revenge from those who oppress us.¹

- Allamah Abdur Rahman Jami writes that once Mutawakkil got a terrible boil, which was incurable. So his mother made a vow that if he was cured, she would donate 10000 dinars to Ibne Reza (a.s.). Fatah Ibne Khakan said: If you permit, I will ask His Eminence, Ali Naqi (a.s.). Mutawakkil was compelled to permit. He wrote a prescription and when the courtiers heard it they burst out laughing. The minister advised giving it a try and within few days it was completely cured. Courtiers were degraded and the mother sent a bag containing ten thousand dinars to the Imam.²
- Abdur Rahman Misri was not among the followers of Ahle Bayt (a.s.), but one day he declared his devotion to Ahle Bayt (a.s.) in public. People were amazed and they asked him to explain. He said: I had gone to Samarra. I heard that Mutawakkil had issued a verdict of execution of a Sayyid Alawite and that he was supposed to arrive after sometime. I waited to see who that person was. I saw a man being escorted there. I was much aggrieved at his nobility that he was being executed when he was innocent. He came near and said: O Abdur Rahman, don't worry I cannot be killed. I was amazed how he came to know my name and I became a believer in his Imamate. He prayed for me about wealth and children and today I have both.³
- An Indian magician came to the court of Mutawakkil and astonished the audience through his tricks. Mutawakkil thought it would be a good idea to degrade Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) through him. So he summoned the Imam and made

¹ *Kharaij wal Jaraih*

² *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*, Pg. 207; *Elaamul Wara*, Allamah Tabarsi, Pg. 208

³ *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 123; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg, 125

the magician sit besides the Imam as he had requested. After some time, dinner was served. As soon as the Imam wanted to take up the loaf of bread, he made it fly away. Imam (a.s.) remained patient and the courtiers started laughing and the same thing was repeated. So much so that after three chances, Imam (a.s.) gestured to the lion of the carpet and he became alive and devoured the magician. There was chaos in the court and Mutawakkil became senseless; he asked Imam (a.s.) to return the magician from the lion of the carpet. Imam (a.s.) asked: Had the staff of Musa returned the magicians? Saying this he left the court.¹

- During Mutawakkil's rule, a woman claimed to be Zainab, the daughter of Ali and Fatima and also claimed that because of prayer of Prophet she regains her youth every forty or fifty years. Mutawakkil asked the scholars to refute this claim but no one succeeded; so Fatah Ibne Khakan summoned Ibne Reza (a.s.). Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) said: Almighty Allah had made the flesh of the descendants of Prophet unlawful on animals. Sent her to your lion den and the truth will become clear. The courtiers got an idea and told the king why they should not try this first with the Imam himself and they sent the Imam into the cage first. Imam (a.s.) agreed to it while Mutawakkil watched the scene from a high spot. The wild beasts placed their heads at the Imam's feet and he stroked them for sometime. When he came out, his miracle became famous everywhere. Mutawakkil presented expensive gifts to the Imam and impostor, Zainab was exposed. It also proved that those who falsely claim to be Sayyids are not worth more than this Zainab.²

We should know that the law that Imam (a.s.) stated is

¹ *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*, Pg. 209; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg, 145

² *Jilaul Uyun*, Pg. 293; *Sawaiqul Mohriqa*, Pg. 124; *Arjahul Matalib*, Pg. 461 *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg, 145

only from the direct descendants of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) through Lady Fatima (s.a.). After that all are called as descendants of Prophet generally.

- Yunus, the gemstone craftsman lived in the neighborhood of the Imam and once the ruler gave him an expensive jewel to work on. Per chance when he was working on it, it broke. He came to the Imam and explained the matter who assured him that it would be all right. Yunus was restless; at last a messenger came summoning him to the court. Imam (a.s.) said: Go, everything will be all right. When Yunus came to court, the king asked him if he has finished polishing the stone. Yunus said the work was incomplete. The king said: There is a dispute among my two sons, so cut it up into two for each of them. Yunus promised to do that and felt happy that what the Imam had assured, proved true.¹
- In 234 A.H. as soon as he came to the throne, Mutawakkil started a new mischief and tried to involve people in such a dispute that they always remain at the throats of each other and do not pay attention to the oppressions of the regime, which is the trick employed by all expert politicians. So he appointed Abu Bakr bin Shaibah in Masjid Rasafa and his brother, Uthman in Masjid Mansur as leaders of congregation and told them to popularize divine qualities, seeing God and creation of Quran and make people involved in this contradiction. Then left Mutazila faith and declared acceptance of Shafei faith and debates ensued between the two sects.

After creating this mischief, he turned his attention to the destruction of the relics of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) and first people were prevented to do the Ziyarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) and then the job of destroying the signs of the grave was entrusted to a neo-Muslim convert from Jewish faith. He tried all means

¹ *Amali*, Shaykh Mufeed; *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 9, Chap 3, Pg. 133

to till the land, but animals refused to do the job as many animals have more cognition of the Imam than some so-called Muslims. The result of these oppressions of Mutawakkil was that many natural calamities occurred and according to some books of history, even ten ounce stones dropped from the sky. This happened in 237 A.H.¹

- Mutawakkil at that time was also busy in setting up the town of Samarrah, which was called as bride of cities and which was spread upto twenty-one miles in radius. Each of its grounds accommodated upto 90000 soldiers. This continued for ten years and oppression on Aale Muhammad (a.s.) was stopped for some time and tyrannies were limited to Iraq. When this work was accomplished, Mutawakkil turned his attention to Medina and planned to wreak havoc there. Abdullah Ibne Muhammad was appointed as governor and ordered to persecute the Saadaat. Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) complained about the governor to Mutawakkil in order to keep him informed and he, instead of deposing the governor took it as a pretext of calling the Imam to Samarrah and said: Since you are facing problems in Medina, please move to Samarrah. Thus he got a chance to oppress the Imam directly to keep him away from people.²
- Instead of sending a letter to summon the Imam, Mutawakkil sent a battalion of three hundred men, which was apparently to show that the son of the Messenger was being called with respect and honor. But the actual plan was to arrest the Imam. Therefore the Imam had to leave his family as well as the tomb of the Prophet. But Providence made sure that Mutawakkil would not succeed in this plan as well. And according to Yahya Ibne Harsama, there was a devotee of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) also who was taunted all the way and on reaching a vale people said:

¹ *Tarikh Islam*, Vol. 1, Pg. 65

² *Jilaul Uyun*, Pg. 292; *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 149

Your master has said that upto seventy dead would be removed from each land. There is no inhabitation here, so how it could be possible? He said: Although I cannot prove it; but if my master has said thus, it cannot be wrong. After that when the letter of Mutawakkil was handed to the Imam in Medina, he asked for a day or two and began to make preparations for winter and rain. There was a furor in the army; that what was use of this preparation and they again started making fun of that devotee of Ahle Bayt (a.s.). Finally the caravan set out after three days. When they reached deep into the desert; at night a terrible storm struck them and a heavy downpour started. People began to freeze with death. The Imam ordered his followers to put on winter clothes and as far as possible, helped the army of Yahya also. By the morning eighty persons lost their lives. They were buried at that same place under the instruction of the Holy Imam (a.s.) and the statement of Imam Ali (a.s.) proved true and the enemies of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) were debased and the devotee of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) was honored and ever Yahya embraced the faith of Ahle Bayt (a.s.).¹

- On reaching Samarra, he was lodged in the center of the poor, Khanus Saleek so that people may not learn about his true personality. A person named Salih Ibne Saeed met the Imam and expressed his regret that it was not a place worthy of lodging the Imam. It was an obvious injustice. Imam (a.s.) made a gesture and Salih saw that the garden of Paradise was visible there. Imam (a.s.) said: Salih, it is for this hereafter that we bear the hardships of life. Salih became reassured at this.²
- After some days, the Imam was taken out from there and placed under house arrest in a house where apparently

¹ *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 124

² *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*, Pg. 208; *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 150

sympathetic treatment was given, but actually he was kept in a spiritual and mental torture.

Taking advantage of apparently kind behavior of the regime the faithful began to frequent the house of the Imam and asked for the solution of all problems. So much so that an applicant came to his door, but he was not at home so he searched him till the village. Although he asked for ten thousand, the Imam gave him a letter for thirty thousand and said: You ask me when I am surrounded by people. He did that and the ruler sent the money to maintain a show of respect. The man said: I am only indebted for ten thousand. Imam (a.s.) said: The remaining would also be useful to you. He came out from there repeating: Allah knows best where to place His message.¹

We should know that the aim of writing a request note was to highlight the fact that I am promising to pay so and so person such and such amount even though I am not indebted to him so in this way the payment becomes a responsibility of the regime like the Almighty Allah has promised to reward all the faithful and doers of good and this had become His logical and legal responsibility although He one owes nothing to anyone and neither a creature has an right on the creator.

- When the Imam was placed under house arrest, people complained to Mutawakkil that the Imam's followers were hoarding weapons in his house and he was going to rise up against him shortly. Mutawakkil approved night raids and soldiers entered the house to find the Imam seated on his prayer mat engrossed in recitation of Quran. They brought him to court and informed Mutawakkil that no weapons were found at his place. He offered the Imam a cup of wine and he said: You know well that wine has not been absorbed into the flesh and skin of Aale Muhammad (a.s.).

¹ *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 150; *Sawaiqul Mohriqa*, Pg. 123; *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*, Pg. 207; *Arjahul Matalib*, Pg. 461

He asked the Imam to recite some couplets and he said: I rarely recite couplets; but when he insisted, he recited the following:

“Those who had spent their lives in luxuries in lofty places are one day brought down from there and buried in a pit, which is going to serve as a grave. After their burial came the voice: Where is the throne and crown and the royal dress? And where are the soft and delicate faces, before which expensive veils were hung. The grave replied in displaying its condition that today worms are crawling on those faces. They continue to consume worldly wealth for a time and now worms are feeding on them.”

As a result of this, Mutawakkil fell down unconscious and when he regained senses, he dismissed the gathering of wine and bid farewell to the Imam with respect.¹

- After that also, the oppressions continued; till another search order was issued and Saeed Hajib says: I entered the house from the rear and found it pitch dark inside. Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) was engrossed in recitation of Quran. When he heard someone descending the steps, he said: Wait, let me get light. I was too much ashamed, but when I searched the house, I only found a sword and a bag that Mutawakkil’s mother had sent. I presented these items to Mutawakkil who sent it back and became ashamed of himself. But even after that he did not give up harassing the Imam. Now instead of house arrest, he had the Imam housed in jail. Initially he was lodged in the prison of Zarafa and then handed over to Razzaqi, which cut off public access to the Imam.²

¹ *Wafayatul Ayan*, Vol. 1, Pg. 322; *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 150; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg. 142

² *Shawahidun Nubuwwah*, Pg. 208; *Jilaul Uyun*, Pg. 294; *Kashful Ghummah*, Pg. 124; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg. 131

- Mutawakkil continued to harass the Imam due to his nature as well as the constant instigation of his men even though his own condition was precarious and there were protests in the whole kingdom. His own son and his personal slave were against him and there was utter chaos outside. But Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) never tried to take advantage of the circumstances. So much so that after Mutawakkil, the condition worsened so much that his sons were deprived of rulership. During the reign of Mustaeen, Yahya Ibne Umar Ibne Husain Ibne Zaid Alawi rebelled in Kufa; Hasan Daiul Haqq seized Tabristan and the Turkish slaves rebelled in the capital. Mustaeen had to flee from Samarra to Baghdad where he sought refuge inside the fort and at last he was slain at the hands of Motazbilla. Motaz now perceived danger from his brothers and had Moyyid killed. Muaffiq was imprisoned in Basra. There was such chaos in the country that anyone could have taken advantage of the situation and occupied the throne for some days. But such was the foresight of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) and 'Islamicness' of his style compelled him not to take any advantage of circumstances. He did not even take part in any rebellion and continued to observe from sidelines so that no opportunity is lost of defense of Islam and propagation of laws. In this way, he continued to serve the religion of his respected grandfather and continued to observe the tyrannical style of the regime.¹
- Mutawakkil, due to his mischievous nature used to invent new methods of harassment. Thus when he could not get a new idea in 247 A.H. he again decided to raze the tomb of Imam Husain (a.s.) and first restrictions were laid on Ziyarat and after that visitors were punished by cutting off their limbs. So much so that when this information became public two persons who were mad in devotion to Ahle Bayt

¹ *Duswein Imam*, Pg. 16

(a.s.) came out to offer sacrifices; Zaid the Majnun set out from Egypt and Bahlool Dana set out from Kufa. First they devised a joint plan and then set out for Kerbala. When they reached there they saw that the direction of Al-Qama river has been turned towards tomb and the holy grave was being erased; but no success was forthcoming as the water used to stop when it reached the grave. These two persons moved forward and the official representative inquired about their identity and the purpose of their visit. They introduced themselves and said that they have come for Ziyarat of the grave of the son of the Messenger. He asked: Do you not know the punishment that is fixed for it? They said: We know it very well and we have come prepared. He was bewildered and he fell down at their feet; after that he went to Mutawakkil and informed him about the incident. He killed that man and hung his corpse from the crucifix; then he had his body dragged through the streets so that others would gain lesson from it. When Zaid learnt about this he immediately went to Samarrah and after burying his corpse recited the Holy Quran at his grave as he had accorded respect to visitors of the tomb of Imam Husain (a.s.) and had laid down his life for it.

After some days, Zaid heard about a death and when he came out, he saw a huge crowd. He thought that perhaps Mutawakkil had died, but it was his maidservant who had passed away and it was the respect that she commanded. Zaid took a deep sigh and exclaimed: God, this is the honor of Mutawakkil's slave girl and the corpse of Imam Husain (a.s.) lay unburied for three days and now the signs of his grave are also being eradicated! Indeed we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. After that he composed some couplets and sent them to Mutawakkil, who got him arrested and imprisoned, but at night he saw that someone was threatening to kill him; so he became worried and released Zaid and he became engrossed in

the mission of his service to religion.¹

- Mutawakkil had become so blatant in injustice that he neither had control over his tongue nor his limbs. So one day, in presence of his son, Mustansir, he spoke insultingly about Lady Fatima (s.a.); he (Mustansir) asked the jurists what the Islamic verdict was about such persons? They said that it makes one eligible to be executed. At night, Mustansir found Mutawakkil alone and killed him and he died carrying the load of his sins. This occurred on 4th Shawwal, 247 A.H.²

Martyrdom

After leaving the hometown, Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) stayed in Samarra for approximately eleven years and during this period he continued to face different kinds of harassments, till in 252 A.H., Motaz, son of Mutawakkil took over the throne and in order to complete what his father had wanted, got the Imam (a.s.) poisoned on 3rd Rajab, 254 A.H.

This incident is clearly mentioned in the following books: *Tadkira Khawasul Ummah*, *Nurul Absar*, Pg. 150, *Sawaiqul Mohriqa*, Pg. 124 etc.³

Before his martyrdom, he had entrusted the inheritance of the prophets to his son, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and the latter also performed the last rites of his father. On the contrary, he also tore his collar to mourn for him and when someone objected, he said that it was the practice of prophets and Prophet Musa (a.s.) had torn his collar in grief of Harun (a.s.).

Most probably this act was aimed to call the attention of

¹ *Biharul Anwar*, Vol. 2, Chap 13, Pg. 184

² *Tarikh Islam*, Vol. 1, Pg. 66; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 1, Pg. 147; *Hadiut Tawareekh* etc.

³ *Anwarul Husainia*, Vol. 2, Pg. 55; *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg. 148

people to the oppressions of regime and that they may inquire what the reason was that the Imam gets a chance to explain the cause, which has always been the philosophy of mourning among the faithful and devotees of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) and through which oppressions of Bani Umayyah were publicized.

We should know that Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) had performed all these acts secretly and apparently at the time of martyrdom there was no one with Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) and he passed away in absolute isolation.¹

Wives and Children

It is mentioned that he had five issues from various wives.²

1- Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), who was the Imam after him and the eleventh successor of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.).³

2- Sayyid Muhammad, whose tomb is situated at Balad in Iraq between Baghdad and Samarrah and which is a popular place of visitation. Some also considered him to be an Imam.⁴

3- Ja'far, who claimed Imamate after Imam Askari (a.s.) and tried to perform his funeral prayer; but Imam Zamana (a.s.) pulled him away from there. He is generally referred to as Ja'far Kazzab, although in some academic circles he is called Ja'far Tawwab (repenter). One of his daughters, Bariha was married to Muhammad, son of Musa Mubarqa.⁵

4- Husain; he was a very pious and religion type of person and he had accepted the Imamate of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). His grave is situated besides the grave of his honorable father.⁶

¹ *Damatus Sakiba*, Vol. 3, Pg. 148; *Jilaul Uyun*, Pg. 192

² *Irshad Mufeed*, Pg. 502; *Sawaiqul Mohriqa*, Pg. 126

³ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 284

⁴ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 278; *Najmus Thaqib*

⁵ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 279

⁶ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 276

5- Aliyya; who was his one and only daughter.¹

Inscription on the finger ring

Inscription on ring said: Allah is my Lord and He is my protector from His other creatures.² And the inscription on the other ring was: Honoring of promises is from the good manners of God.³

Companions

1- Husain Ibne Saeed Ibne Hammad Ibne Saeed Ibne Mahran Ahwazi

He was originally from Kufa, but later on he had relocated to Ahwaz. He is included among companions of Imam Ali Reza (a.s.), Imam Jawad (a.s.) and Imam Hadi (a.s.). He passed away in Qom. He was the author of thirty books and his brother, Hasan penned fifty books and contributed in writing those thirty books also. The distinction of the books of Husain Ibne Saeed Ahwazi is that they are presented as models. He brought Ali Ibne Mahziyar, Ishaq Ibne Ibrahim Huzaini and Ali Ibne Rayyan to the Imam and was instrumental in their conversion to Shia faith.⁴

2- Khairan, servant of Imam Ali Reza (a.s.)

He also had got the honor of seeing three Imams and was among their confidants. Imam Hadi (a.s.) has appointed him as his representative and asked him to use his mind about

¹ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 279

² *Fusulul Muhimma*

³ *Misbah Kafami*

⁴ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 280

adjudicating matters, as his opinion is same as opinion of the Imam and his obedience is same as obedience of the Imam.¹

3- Abu Hashim Ja'far Dawood Ibne Qasim Ibne Ishaq Ibne Abdullah Ibne Ja'far Ibne Abi Talib

He was present from the time of Imam Reza (a.s.) to Imam Zamana (a.s.) and was also the representative of Imam Zamana (a.s.). He was an extremely pious and religious person. He passed away in 261 A.H. and was buried in Baghdad.

4- Abdul Azeem Ibne Abdullah Ibne Ali Ibne Hasan Ibne Zaid Ibne Hasan Ibne Ali Ibne Abi Talib

He is included among the senior-most scholars of traditions, prominent learned men of his time and the pious persons of Islam. He was a companion of Imam Hadi and Imam Jawad (a.s.). He is the narrator of numerous traditional reports. Of his distinctions is the fact that he got all his beliefs approved from Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.): Monotheism, non-attribution of corporeality, creator of whole universe; finality of prophethood of the Prophet of Islam; permanence of Shariah of seal of the prophets, Imamate of Holy Imams (a.s.), Imam Ali (a.s.), Hasan, Husain, Ali Ibnul Husain, Muhammad Ibne Ali, Ja'far Ibne Muhammad, Musa Ibne Ja'far, Ali Ibne Musa, Muhammad Ibne Ali, Ali Ibne Muhammad. When Abdul Azeem stopped here, Imam (a.s.) said: After me, my son, Hasan Askari (a.s.) and after him his son, the last Hujjat, whose name cannot be pronounced before reappearance; he would go into occultation and in the end he would reappear and fill up the earth with justice and equity.

After that His Eminence, Abdul Azeem mentioned that

¹ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 280

Meraj, questioning of the grave, Paradise, Hell, Siraat Bridge, Mizan and Qiyamat were all true and after beliefs, he mentioned practical acts like: prayers, Zakat, fast, Hajj, Jihad, Amr bil Maroof and Nahy Anil Munkar. Imam (a.s.) said: Indeed this is the religion that Almighty Allah has chosen for His servants.¹

5- Ali Ibne Ja'far Haminawi

He was a resident of Baghdad suburbs and was the representative of Imam Hadi (a.s.). When Mutawakkil learnt of this he threw him into prison and issued orders for his execution. He requested the Imam to pray for him and when Imam prayed, Mutawakkil fell suddenly ill and as ransom released all prisoners. Under orders of Imam (a.s.), he moved to Mecca and settled down there.²

6- Ibne Sikkit Ibne Yaqub Ibne Ishaq Ahwazi

He was among special companions of Imam Hadi and Imam Jawad (a.s.) and was an expert of literature and grammar. So much so that Mutawakkil appointed him as tutor of his sons. One day the tyrant asked: Who are superior, my sons or Hasan and Husain? In reply, initially Ibne Sikkit mentioned the excellence of Hasan and Husain and then said: Their slave, Qambar is also better than you and your sons. Mutawakkil punished him by having his tongue pulled out from behind his head and had him beaten so severely that he passed away. Since he was mostly silent, he was referred to as Ibne Sikkit (silent).³

¹ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 281

² *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 282

³ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 282

Wise sayings

- One who would be pleased with himself would displease many.¹

Man is supposed to monitor his deeds and he must ever become proud of his acts as self conceit can destroy a person anytime.

- One who is patient has single difficulty and one who pleads has it doubled.²

When a person adopts patience, after the calamity he becomes eligible for divine rewards and only the effect of hardship remains. One, who complains, becomes deprived of divine rewards and is involved in the trouble of the world and hereafter.

- Vain joking is an entertainment of fools and art of ignorant.³

Sensible and educated people avoid such things that destroy human dignity.

- Wakefulness makes one more desirous of sleep and hunger increases taste of food.⁴

It means that if a person likes sleep and tasty food he should first remain awake and then go to sleep and first he should eat only when he is hungry.

- Remember those last moments, when you would be among the family members, but neither a physician would be of any use nor a friend.⁵

¹ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 257

² *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 257

³ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 258

⁴ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 258

⁵ *Ahsanul Maqal*, Vol. 2, Pg. 259

Alas, if man should become attentive to this end of the life of the world; he would then create a revolution in his character. When the people of the world are of no use while alive, how they would be useful after death?