

*In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.*

## THE IMAM OF OUR TIME – IMAM MAHDI (ATFS)

At dawn, on the 15th Sha'ban 255 A.H., the rays of the illuminating world shone with a powerful shaft of light into a human form, which became the source of existence for the universe.

Yes, finally, the Divine promise was fulfilled and Imam al- Mahdi (A.S) was born in spite of the efforts of those who denied him:

There existed a good deal of harmony and uniformity between the aspects pertaining to the births of Prophet Muhammad, the last Apostle of Allah and Imam Mahdi, the last Apostolical Imam. Just as the coming of the Holy Prophet was prophesized well in advance by the preceding Prophets similarly the impending news of the gracious birth of Imam al- Mahdi was foretold by the Holy Prophet.

“ Al-Mahdi is one of the children of Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter). ”  
Prophet Muhammad (SAWW)

Innumerable traditions in this context quoted right from The Holy Prophet from the glowing contents of many books of Masanid, Sehan, and Akhbar and of Shia Scholars existed. Many Sunni scholars have accumulated these traditions in complete volumes also.

Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (AS) was born on the 15th Shaban 255 A.H. in the city of Samarra. The momentous and miraculous aspects of his birth greatly resembled those under which the Prophet Musa (Moses) was born. The birth of Hazart Musa had signaled the downfall and extinction of the empire of Pharaoh, who had ordered the slaying of all the newly born children of Bani-Israel. The Abbaside kings were similarly apprehensive of the continuous traditions of the Holy Prophet about the birth of Imam Mahdi, who was to bring about a curse to their (Abbaside) very empire. They were, therefore, laying in ambush to discover the birth of the Imam and to put an end to his life. But the event of the Imam's birth was enveloped and shielded by the same Divine protection and miraculous phenomena which had marked the historical birth of Prophet Musa. (Al Quran 28:7-13) His birth remained strictly confidential and his nursery shrouded in secrecy except to a few devotees.

The Imam's birth had coincided with the reign of al-Mutamad, the well-known Abbaside king. He, being aware of the prophecy of the twelfth Imam's birth occurring in his reign, was extremely worried and anxious to trace him out. But on the death of Imam Hasan Askari, when he was informed about the Imam's funeral prayer having been conducted by his four year old son, his perplexity knew no bounds. It struck his mind that this very boy must be the Imam, but he managed to hide his inner concern at the news of the existence of the young Imam. In order to get confirmation that the young Imam did in fact exist, he ordered the arrest of the Imam's mother, Janab-e-Nargis Khatoon (AS).

When Janab Nargis Khatoon was brought before Al-Mutamad and inquiries made about the birth of the twelfth Holy Imam, she, in order to safeguard her own life as well as to protect her son, replied that she had never felt the symptoms of maternity and labor pain; so, for the moment, he did not harass her, but did put her under the most strict surveillance of Qazi Abu Shorab, entrusting him with the task of killing any child born to her.

Soon after this incident, the Abbasid kingdom passed through a revolutionary phase which greatly bewildered al-Mutamad. He was forced to face the invasion of Sahib-al-Zanj, who raided Hejaz and Yemen and let loose the hounds of loot and arson throughout the Abbasid kingdom, subjecting the administration of Baghdad, the capital, to utter chaos. Al-Mutamad was, therefore, naturally too occupied by warfare to pay any attention towards Janab Nargis Khatoon, who was consequently released after six months and questioned no further about the birth of the twelfth Holy Imam.

In the next few issues, we will discuss Imam Mahdi (AS)'s childhood, Imamate, the last letter written by him to his representative (during ghaibat-sughra) & some ahadith.



HUBB WA 'SALAM  
N E W S L E T T E R

