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**A GLANCE AT THE LIFE OF
HAZRAT FATIMAH MA'SUMAH
QUM (A. S)**

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PREFACE

It was during my travel of Ziyarat that I came across the book of the Holy Lady of the Household of Prophet Muhammad (SAWW), daughter of the Holy seventh Infallible vicegerent of the Holy Prophet Imam Musa Kadhim, sister of the eighth Imam and aunt to the ninth Imam, who is better known as Masuma Qom.

Her actual name is Fatimah and though she is from the pure progeny of Rasulallah, the Messenger of God (SAWW). She was not Infallible but her piety was such that it earned her the name of Masuma (the Infallible. (

The book in Persian with the title “*NIGHA-HAA-E BAR ZINDAGAANI-E-HAZRATE FATIMAH-E-MAASUMA A.S.*” by Gulamraza Haydari Abhaari caught my eye and said to myself that I had not seen any biography, though short, to this Madhloomah (wronged) lady in English. With this thought, I bought the book and, upon returning from Ziyaarat, felt that only this small book if Allah grants me life I prayed and wished that the honour of translating the book be rewarded to me. Alhamdulillah, I have tried my utmost and now the book is in front of you.

The whole aim is that the young generation specially is not well versed with the Islamic History and the Heroes of Islam, and small booklets have become a necessity to refresh the history, and get that vigour and courage to imitate the heroes and tread the path of Haqq (truth)-Islam with all understanding.

I have tried my utmost to translate word for word and hope if by any human error any mistake you come across kindly forward it to me through the publisher or through my e-mail. Also, I came across a small different version of the Holy lady’s life, which I have put together with the booklet on the last page.

Wassalaam

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Tanzania.

THE BIRTH OF THE HOLY LADY FATIMAH MA'SUMAH AND HER CHILDHOOD

In the Holy city of Medina, the Holy household was awaiting the arrival of a new born.

In the house of Imam Kadhim (a. s.), Najma, the wife of the Honourable Imam was eagerly looking forward to the arrival of the child; she was counting days and nights for that day. The Imam's house was overwhelmed with happiness.

Finally, the day arrived, on the first of Dhil-qa'dah 173 (A. H) when Allah blessed the seventh Imam Musa Kadhim (A. S) with a daughter. The child's appearance was brilliant and cheerful and she opened her pure bright eyes to this world in the house of Imam.

All the members of the Holy Household were in utter happiness for the newborn and after the Imam, may be there was not anybody as happy as his wife Najma. This was because this was the second child that was granted by the grace of Allah to Najma after twenty-five years ago, in the same month of Dhil-qa'dah, Najma had given birth to a baby boy who after his father was to become the Imam and was to shoulder the responsibility of Imamate and guiding the Shias.

Yes! That was 148 (A. H), when the eight Imam, Ali (A. S) was born and who was given the title of Ridha. Najma got immense pleasure in her first child and after years, God blessed her and her husband Musa Kadhim (A. S) with a daughter and a sister to Imam Ridha (A. S)

Imam Musa Kadhim (A. S) named his daughter Fatimah, for the sake of love and special attachment he had with his grandmother Fatimah Zahra (A. S). Fatimah's purity, modesty, and piety were such that after sometime she was referred as Ma'sumah (the infallible). This was because like her Honourable Father, she used to keep away from all evils and sins.

Fatimah was a name that was remembered among the Ahul-bayt who had hundreds of sad and sweet memories of the life of Bibi Fatimah (A. S).

If anybody chose the name Fatimah for their daughters, they used to give the same respect as the prophet (S. A. W) used to give his daughter. She was never neglected. Imam Musa Kadhim (A. S) also followed this tradition, used to love the new girl very much, and never failed to show and express his kindness to and love for her.

Fatimah Ma'sumah was growing under the shelter of her father and dear mother and was day by day learning new things from both of them. If the father of Fatimah was the Imam of the Shias and was matchless in his piety and chastity, then her mother was also pious and faithful who had accomplished her essential studies of Islam in the school of the wife of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A. S). In those days she was the most intelligent amongst all women and it was for reason that the mother of Imam Kadhim (Hamideh) asked him to propose and marry her.

Hazrat Fatimah Ma'sumah took advantage of studying in the presence of her father, brother and pious mother. All her young life was full of Islamic education. Every Friday shias would come to Medina with their religious questions. After getting their questions answered by Imam Kadhim (A. S), they would return to their town. Incidentally, once Imam Kadhim was away

and Imam Ridha (A. S) was also not around. The Shias without getting their question answered were returning home very sad.

Fatimah Ma'sumah noticed the sadness and took the papers from them and answered their questions. The shias became happy and left. On the outskirts of Medina, they met Imam Kadhim (A. S) and they informed him of all that had transpired in his house. The Imam asked to read his daughter's answers and after reading expressed his happiness, praised her and in a short sentence said, May her father be sacrificed for her.

THE BEGINNING OF HER GRIEF AND THE MARTYRDOM OF HER FATHER

At that time, the Prophet's offspring were tortured by the governors and the kings, especially Imam Kadhim (A. S) who was also being continuously suffered at the hands of the cruel Khalifas. Bibi Fatimah's heart hurt to see her father in discomfort and pain. She was grieved and very sad and it was only her brother, Imam Ridha (A. S) who calmed and comforted her and her other family members.

During the time of the seventh Imam, until his death, he saw the reign of five Khalifas whose names were Abul Abbas Saffah, Mansur Dawaniqi, Hadi, Mahdi and Harun Rashid. Each of them tortured the Imam in their own way and not only the Imam but also the alawites were subjected to harsh cruelty and harassment, which was beyond human endurance.

Three years of Harun's caliphate had elapsed when Fatimah Ma'sumah was born. Harun was the most tyrannical of all the Khalifas that had gone before him in cruelty, bullying, looting, robbing the public treasury and trampling on the rights of people. He was a Caliph of the worldly desires and mammonist. Imam Kadhim (A. S) could not bear to watch quietly the oppression of the Muslims and the plunder of the wealth of the Ummah. He started a movement and used different methods to oppose and revolt against the cruel government. Harun, aware of Imam Kadhim and his follower's opposition, also did as much as he could against them. He gave a lot of money to poets to write poetry against the offspring of the Prophets. The Alids (followers of Imam Ali) were either imprisoned or exiled and some were put in cages and tortured until they suffered martyrdom. Later he also used his strength and power to arrest Imam Kadhim (A. S).

After his arrest, until his death, Bibi Fatimah could not meet her father. She, who was brought up and educated by her father, was now deprived of meeting her father and also getting the education. Her father's arrest saddened her. She was less than ten years old at that time and was always in grief and parting from her father saddened her even more.

As for Imam Kadhim, it was difficult for him to call or see his pure and pious children, Imam Ridha and H. Ma'sumah. The dark room of his prison became bright and scented with his prayers.

He changed his hard days into sweet ones by continuous prostration but whenever he remembered Bibi Fatimah Ma'sumah and her innocent sinless appearance, his heart throbbed and palpitated.

During the last years of Imam Musa-Kadhim (A. S), he was transferred from one prison to another, for a year he was in the prison of Isa-bin - Jaf'ar the governor of Basra. Isa-bin- Jaf'ar became affected by the great qualities of the high leadership of Shias that he had no alternative but to persuade the officer of the prison to be lenient to the Imam.

After that, Harun gave the order for Imam to be taken to Baghdad. First, he was in the prison of Fadhl bin Rabii. Then Fadhl bin Rabii transferred him to the prison of Sindi bin Shahik.

This shifting and transferring continued and every time Harun would tell all the jailers to kill Imam. Nobody was ever ready to think about that until Sindi bin Shahik complied with the order of Harun to poison the Imam.

Harun definitely knew that the result would be dangerous if the people found out that the Imam was killed by him, so before the martyrdom of Imam he took a group of leading personalities to give witness that the dear Imam was so sick that it was possible he would die and that there was no intention of anyone to kill the Imam. But Imam was also clever, and before Harun could say anything. Imam himself told the group who were near him that "I have been poisoned by nine pieces of dates. Tomorrow my body will turn green and I will leave the world the day after tomorrow".

And exactly two days later, on the twenty-fifth of Rajab 183 (A. H) as the Imam had predicted the day of his martyrdom had come. The Imam went to join the soul of his great grandfathers. When the Shias heard about the martyrdom of the Imam, they were grief stricken, and with mourning clothes and tears in their eyes, they went into mourning. They loved the Imam and had sworn allegiance to Him and now they had lost him. Nothing could console them on the loss of this noble Imam. Also amongst them was a ten year old girl, H. Fatimah Ma'sumah who was engrossed in grief.

She sat and waited in hope for years that one day the door of the house would open and her father would enter and hug her. But finally, her little heart accepted this grief as she had no choice but to be patient.

THE JOURNEY OF HER BROTHER TO MERV

Merv is the name of a city in Khursan. After Imam Kadhim's death, Imam Ridha (A. S) assumed the office of the Imamate. He was thirty-five years old. He was now the protector of Islamic Ummah and the guide of the Shias. He was the only successor who was given this responsibility by his father Imam Musa Kadhim (A. S). He was also the guardian of his children after his death.

The oppression and the cruelty of Harun's rule went on but Imam Ridha (A. S) continued with the responsibility of carrying out divine duties and went on spreading the word of God and the rights without any fear. He was always busy and never rested until he reached his aim.

Harun could not bear to watch Imam becoming so popular and his followers adoring him but he could not openly show his enmity or do anything to stop the Imam.

Finally, in 193 A. H, Harun became sick and died. By his death, the Muslims were relieved of one of the most evil oppressor and his tyranny.

After Harun, his brother Amin became the Caliph. He ruled for only four years, as there was bitter fighting between Amin and his brother for the Caliphate. This led to bloodshed and Amin was subsequently killed in the year 198 A. H, after which Mamun became the ruler.

It was during this time when the two brothers were fighting that Imam Ridha made the most use of this opportunity to spread the word of God and guide the Muslim Ummah.

The Abbasid government at this time was busy fighting amongst themselves for the kingdom, so there were fewer hardships for the Imam's family.

Mamun with his trickery came to power. He was not a Caliph who was just but someone who had fooled his people to get the power. This deceiving continued and to show that he was not only a wise king but also a man who encouraged intellectual and scientific education. He invited scholars, learned men, organized meetings, and seminars. So on one side he supported the scholars and on the other side, to attract the many Shias, he openly showed the love he had for Ahlulbayt, started praising Imam Ali and cursing Muawiya. This was a concerted effort to trick the Shias that he also was interested in the spread of Islam through the region. His supporters were not happy with his strategy but Mamun knew that if his enemies and the Shias would get together then he would be overthrown so he had to take first the Shias into his confidence and to do this he devised a plan to offer Imam Ridha (A. S) to be the successor after him. This was to win confidence from both the enemies and the Shias.

So, Mamun started writing letters upon letters to Imam Ridha to become his successor. But despite all the forces of Mamun it did not bear fruit as Imam Ridha refused to take their responsibility, which would be harmful for Muslims, so he bluntly refused. But Mamun was not going to give up so easily when he realized that his plan was not working he sent a man called Raja-bin-Dhahhak to Medina in 200 A. H with an order to bring Imam to Marv (later called Toos and now Mash-had). This was at that time the seat

of his empire and he hoped the Imam would agree to be the governor of this city.

On receiving the information the Imam visited the grave of the Prophet and the Imams (buried in the Jannat-ul-baqi) and said goodbye to his children, brothers and sisters including Fatimah Ma'sumah and left Medina for Merv. There was a sad atmosphere as the whole family was unwilling to see their protector and guide leave them but had no choice.

For Bibi Fatimah this separation was very difficult as after the passing away of her father, the seventh Imam she was continuously under the guardianship of her brother Imam Ridha (A. S). Now he had to leave Medina and for her the happy days were over.

Mamun had devised a plan for the Imam's journey. He had made sure that on Imam's route to Merv (later called Toos and now Mash-had) the Imam's caravan should not pass the two towns of Shias, which were Kufa and Qum. He was afraid that if the Imam passed these places there could be a revolution and he would be overthrown.

He also knew that the Shias of Kufa and Qum had a great love for the offspring of the Prophet. So the Imam should under no circumstances take this route.

The Muslim population however made all arrangements for the Imam is welcome on the route he was supposed to pass and took full advantage of the Imam's presence when the caravan stopped.

The whole route of Iran was decorated and he was warmly welcomed. One of the towns on the route to Iran was Neshapur. When the people of Neshapur heard that the Imam was coming they gathered and were anxious to learn something from the Imam. When Imam camped, the people gathered at his camp and asked Imam to teach them something and the Imam agreed. He told them a Hadith of the Prophet (S. A. W). He said, "**LA ILAHA ILLALLAH**" is a strong fort and whosoever enters the fort will be saved from the fire of Hell. Then the Imam moved a few steps forward and continued with the Hadith and addressing, the crowd said: "but there are conditions to it and I am one of those conditions". Imam was actually emphasizing the importance of Imamate by this Hadith, and teaching them that only belief in Allah is not sufficient for the passage to heaven.

After a few days in Nishapur, Imam went on with his journey to Merv (later known as Toos and now Mash-had).

Mamun again requested the Imam to be his successor but Imam as before refused. This arrangement between Mamun and Imam continued for two months and with Mamun's force Imam had no choice. So on the seventh of Ramadan 201 (A. H) tearfully and sadly he agreed but with a condition that he would not involve himself into day to day deliberation of the government.

THE MIGRATION OF THE IMAM'S SISTER (FATIMAH MA'SUMAH) FROM MEDINA TO MERV

One year had passed since the eighth Imam had left for Merv. All the Prophets family members living in Medina yearned and were eager for his return.

It was already a year now that they had not seen their dear Imam and their hearts only desired and yearned to see the Imam's face. But Fatimah Ma'sumah had waited long enough and now her patience was running out and like the other family members, she could only get peace if she met her brother.

During that time, Imam Ridha wrote a letter to his sister Bibi Fatimah Ma'sumah and sent it to Medina with one of his slave. He ordered the slave not to stop anywhere until he reached Medina and gave him proper instructions and the proper address so the slave could find the house without asking anyone.

The slave arrived with the letter as fast as he could, and in Medina he immediately delivered to H. Fatimah. What were the contents of the letter nobody knew, but the Imam's family became more grieved and yearned more for the Imam. Bibi Fatimah, her brother and other family members decided to go to Merv to visit the Imam. They started preparations for their journey and taking water and minimum provisions decided to leave the city of the messenger of Allah (that is Medina) for Merv. Amongst all the people, Bibi Fatimah was the most excited. That dear Lady with her five brothers whose names were Fadhl, Ja'far, Ha'adi, Qasim and Zayd and their brothers' children and servants and slave girls were all part of this journey.

This caravan of the lovers of Imam Ridha (A. S) started their journey and apart from waiting for prayers, meals and rest, they never stopped. They passed hills, mountains, and deserts and day by day went further from Medina. This difficult journey through the deserts was so arduous that not only them but also the strong camels were tired and they still had to go a long way to Merv. But their eagerness and their hope of reaching the Imam urged them to move forward.

In those days, there was a lot of looting of the caravans. These thieves would take away all belongings and even the camels. If they did not find anything, they would kill the people. This frightened them a lot as they did not want their journey to break or for anything to happen to stop them from going forward.

This thought frightened Bibi Fatimah but putting trust to Allah, they carried forward and gradually progressed towards their goal. Days and nights passed and this caravan of the lovers of Imam Ridha went further and further from the deserts of Medina. Now the distance to Iran was becoming closer. The difficulties of the journey affected Bibi Ma'sumah a lot. For this young woman also there was a lot of suffering. But despite all this, the thought of meeting her brother was worth all the pain. She was ready to go through this a hundred times to get this reward. On her journey, she remembered the face of her brother and the good and difficult times they

had together and now she was happy that in a few days she would look at his handsome face again.

Finally, the difficult part of the journey ended and the caravan reached Iran. Before reaching Merv (later Toos and now Mash-had) they passed through many villages where they would rest and then proceed, finally they reached. The caravan of the eighth Imam (A. S) reached Sawa (name of a city in Iraq) and it was here that Bibi Fatimah became very sick. She was so sick that she refused to continue with the journey. The long journey from Medina to Sawa had weakened her but this sickness made her even weaker. With this condition, she was worried. Would she be able to go forward ? And would she now be able to see her brother ? These were questions that the daughter of Imam Kadhim (A. S) often asked herself when she saw her condition. She made a decision now to proceed to Qum and inquired from people the distance to Qum. They replied ten miles. Hearing that the distance was not too much they decide to proceed.

In those days, Qum was a place, which offered sanctuary, and peace for the family of the Prophet since at that time, Shiaism had not spread in Iran but because of migration of Ash'arites Arabs from Kufa to Qum, this place became known of Shias and groups of the lovers of Ahlulbayt and their friends lived here. Years before that the Ash'arites, in order to escape from the oppression and tyranny of Bani Umayya (who had enmity towards the Prophets family and to the devotees of Imam Ali) had come from Kufa to Qum and for a long time had settled there. The news of Bibi Fatimah's arrival from Sawa and her sickness reached Qum.

The people of Qum who had strong unity decided to go to receive H. Fatimah and to bring her to Qum. A person called Musa ibn Khazraj undertook this task of going and inviting the daughter of seventh imam to Qum and requesting her to stay with them in Qum and Fatimah agreed to the request and the caravan left from Sawa to Qum. Musa ibn Khazraj himself held the camel's reins and led this noble woman with pride and respect to the people of Qum who were eagerly waiting her arrival.

SICKNESS AND THE DEATH OF THE DAUGHTER OF IMAM KADHIM (A. S) (THE SEVENTH IMAM)

Bibi Fatimah and her companions finally entered the town of Qum on twenty-third Rabi- ul Awwal 201 (A. H) where they were very warmly welcome by the people of the town. The people of Qum were elated to have the daughter of the seventh Imam among them. Musa ibn Khazraj was a rich man with a noble status.

He had also a big home and offered Bibi Fatimah to stay at his home and taking the reins led the caravan to his house, excited and happy to be a good host for his guest. He started arranging for all their requirements.

H. Fatimah chose a place for herself in which to pray and invoke the Almighty Allah. She prayed for her health and the problems she had faced and to ask God for everything she wanted. She wanted help from God only. The place to-date still exists and is known as “BAYT-UN-NOOR”. The sickness of Imam Kadhim’s daughter, made her host and companions and the people of Qum very sad. They left no stone unturned and did their best for her health but her health deteriorated day by day. Her sickness spread in the whole body and finally on the tenth of Rabi-ul-Akher this noble lady with tears in her eyes at the thought of her brother, left this perishable world. The people of Qum mourned the affliction of this injured lady. They all sat in mourning.

HER BURIAL RITES

The Shias and the well-wishers of Ahl-ul-bayt respectfully washed the holy body of Hazrat Ma'sumah and shrouded her, and when the burial time arrived, the Ash'ari nobles decide to bury her at a special place and not at the common cemetery. This was unusually a respect for the noble lady who was the daughter of Imam Kadhim (A. S) (the seventh Imam)

Musa ibn Khazraj also undertook this noble task. He had a big garden in an area called Babulan. He donated the place for Bibi Ma'sumah to be buried. All the other preparations were ready. Now the question was who would bury her ? This talk was going on when finally they concluded that an old man called Qadir be appointed for this job. Qadir was summoned to give the last funeral rites, but before he could come, two-veiled person on the horse (contrary to the prevailing customs) suddenly appeared and went near the burial place. They dismounted, led the prayer of mayyit and with respect laid her body to rest then left. The funeral ceremony was over and the town of Qum decided to build a Mausoleum for the Imam's dear daughter. Musa ibn Khazraj donated the whole garden now as a burial ground for the muslim, and surrounding boundaries for the followers (shias) of Ali (A. S).

THE MAUSOLEUM OF BIBI FATIMAH MA'SUMAH SINCE ITS INCEPTION

The people of Qum made a mausoleum of straw structure which was intended to be given the utmost respect and importance for this lady, the daughter and the sister of the Imam. After fifty years, the daughter of Imam Jawad called Zainab, instructed for first dome to be built. Then the making of the whole Haram was undertaken by the well wishers and the followers (Shias) of the Ah-ul-bayt. After a few years of the passing away of Bibi Fatimah other children of Imam were also buried here. Hence, this place gained a lot of respect and importance as now there were many children of Imams buried here. And we find in history that this noble place brought blessing for people and offered sanctuary to them, whoever would ask anything from this lady and the sick would be cured. These miracles still take place at this holy place. Imam Sadiq has said: Our followers (Shias) who ask for Bibi Ma'sumah's intercession will go to heaven. The importance and respect for this place grows day by day and because of this it has become a busy center. Also more and more Shias are finding out about this place, because of the blessing of this Noble Lady there have sprung many fountains of learning in Qum and many learned people became religious scholars here.

Even Imam Khomeini, the great scholar and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran frequently reminded that he also lived in Qum and received his education with the blessing and sanctity of the Haram of this Noble Lady. He raised the flag of Islam and started the revolution from this place. This Haram shines like diamond in the town. People come from all over the world to visit and pay respects to this Noble Lady. This is just to show their deep love and attachment for this Noble Lady and family of the Holy Prophet (S. A. W).

THREE SAYINGS OF BIBI FATIMAH MA'SUMAH BY THREE IMAMS

- Imam Sadiq (A. S) said: soon a lady by the name Fatimah from my family will be buried in QUM. Heaven becomes obligatory on one who visits her.
- Imam Radha (A. S) said: One who visits Her will be granted Heaven
- Imam Jaw?d (A. S) said: that one who visits my Aunt in Qum will be granted heaven.

BIBI MASUMA QUM (AS)

Name: Fatimah

Title: Ma'sumah

Daughter of: Imam Musa Kadhim & Bibi Najma (as)

Sister of: Imam Ali Raza (as)

Birthdate: Dhu'l-Qa`dah 179 AH in Medina.

After the shahadat of our 7th Imam, Imam Musa Kadhim (as), the 8th Imam, Imam Ali Raza (as) took care of his family and his sisters.

Bibi Fatimah loved her brother immensely (similar love as that of Bibi Zainab (as) and Imam Husayn (as)).

In 200AH Mamoon Rashid called Imam Raza (as) to Khorasan from Medina, no family member was allowed to accompany him. Bibi Masuma missed her brother very much and left Medina for Iran.

When she reached Sawa, she learnt the news of shahadat of her brother. On learning this, she became very ill and asked to be taken to Qum. Within a few days after her brother's death, she died. She was buried in Qum on 8th Rabi-ul-Awwal 201AH. She was only 22 years of age.

People pay great respect and visit her grave and have their hajjat (wishes) fulfilled. She was the daughter of our 7th Imam, sister of our 8th Imam, aunt of 9th Our Imam - great respect to this lady surrounded by Imams.

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