Fatimah Funeral Service

Her Ablution, Her grave clothes, prayer, and burial

Mohammad Ali Javdan

After the demise of the holy Prophet, catastrophic events happened in the life of hazrat Zahra (a.s.) , such as Saqifah event, seizure of caliphate, and confiscation of Fadak. Her attempt to restore Fadak, forcing ‘Ali to take pledge to Abu-Bakr, hitting hazrat Zahra (a.s.), her illness, and some other issues caused her a lot of sadness and eventually she passed away in a short time after her father. Islamic historians and researchers wrote about various issues of how she was buried and specially the site of her burial in the history of Islam and in the Shia history. Amongst old scholars , for example, ibn Sa’d in his Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra[1], Bilazuri in Ansab Al-Ashraf[2], Tabari in his Tarikh al-Umam va al-Molok[3], Mufid in Al-Ikhtisas and ibn Shahr Ashub in Manaqib Al Abi Talib[4] reported the night of her burial. From contemporary scholars also Sayyid Mohsen Amin ‘Amili in Ayan Al-Shia and others reported this night

[1] 8/28-30

[2] 2/33-34

[3] 2/473-474

[4] 3/137-140

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According to some sources, the news of Zahra's martyrdom spread in Medina and people gathered around 'Ali's house to take part in the Pray and funeral service. But Abudhar came out of the house and by the excuse of delaying the funeral service scattered people.[1]

Due to the great status of hazrat Zahra (a.s.) among public, the significant and powerful people of that time intended to join her funeral service; but she did not like those whom she was not satisfied with be present in her funeral service. According to various reports, 'Aisha was one of the first ones who went to Fatimah's home but Asma', according to Zahra's will, did not let her to enter.[2] Based on a report, Abu-Bakr and 'Umar ibn Khattab also went to her home in that night and asked 'Ali not to pray to Fatimah without their presence.[3]

From Ibn Sa'd[4], Bilazuri[5] and Tabari [6], historians of third century, various reports have been reported from Sahabah and Tabe'in which asserted her being buried during night and hidden from people. Bukhari[7] and some other Sunnite traditionists also pointed out to this midnight-burial saying 'Ali did not inform Abu-Bakr of the time of her funeral[8] which was because of her will to be buried secretly.

According to Imam 'Ali, the first request of Fatimah on how to be carried out after her death was in the bitter days after the demise of the Prophet. Hazrat Zahra (a.s.) after telling her dream to 'Ali had made him promise that when she passed away only a few people should have been informed; these people were Umme Salma (one of the wives of Prophet), Umme Ayman and Fidhah, and her two sons Hasan and Husayn, and Abdullah ibn Abbas, Salman Farsi, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Mighdad, Abudhar and Huzaifa. Then she asked 'Ali to do her ablution and buried her midnight and did not reveal the site of her grave.[9] According to the great Shia scholars including Sheikh Saduq[10], Fital Neyshaburi [11] and Majlisi [12] the daughter of Prophet willed 'Ali: "do bury me midnight lest those who oppressed me and seized our right do not attend my funeral service." It is narrated from imam Sadiq that Fatimah took this promise from 'Ali at her death bed that he buried her as she desired.[13]

Funeral process:

Her holy body was carried in the heart of midnight in a coffin that she got it made.[14] Regarding her burial, a little information is at hand. It is said that 'Ali, Abbas and Fazl went down to her grave and put her body in it.[15] According to another narration, it was 'Ali who was

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putting to put her body inside the grave, while a hand came out of the grave and got the body and put it in the grave.[16]

According to a tradition narrated from imam Sadiq by Saduq, Abu-Bakr and 'Umar went to visit Fatimah in one morning. On the way, they saw a man from Quraish who said Fatimah passed away and was buried last night. Upon hearing this, they got distressed and 'Ali swore God he did not inform them because Fatimah wished this and it was impossible for him to disagree.[17] In other narrations, it is said Muslims went to Baqi' in that morning and saw forty graves there. They felt disrespected; they blamed each other that the only daughter of Prophet died and buried but we were not present and even we didn't know which one was her grave. The governors ordered some women to excavate the graves to find Zahra's grave and then said prayer to her body.[18]

When 'Ali heard this, angrily rushed out of his home. His eyes turned red out of his rage and vessels of his neck were swollen. He was wearing a yellow cloak which he used to wear for wars. Those who saw this, hurriedly went to Baqi' and warned people that 'Ali swore if any one touched these graves, he would kill the one who ordered this. Imam went to Baqi' and his companions approached him and swore they would find the grave of her and pray at her. But 'Ali aggressively opposed 'Umar and even threatened him; Abu-Bakr interfered and 'Umar changed his mind. People scattered after that.[19]

The place of her grave:

Due to her secret burial, there are some disagreement about the place of her grave.

1.**The home of her holiness**: the first possibility is the home of her.[20] Her house was next to the Prophet's home, next to the mosque of the Prophet[21] which after expansion of the mosque it came inside the mosque. The documents of her burial inside her home is authentic and great scholars asserted this.[22] Some historical reports also approved this, for example the tradition of imam Sadiq about this which goes 'Ali buried Zahra (a.s.) in her home, where it became part of the mosque.[23] In another tradition, from Imam Sadiq, it has been narrated she was buried in her home where later by Bani Umayyeh's expansion it became a part of the mosque.[24] In addition to it, imam Rida, answering one who was asking about her grave, referred to the narration from Imam Sadiq and answered she was buried in her home.[25] In a tradition from Kulayni from imam Husayn it is asserted that 'Ali said, "Our

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greetings to you , the Prophet of God, on behalf of me and your daughter who is coming to visit you and is resting in your shrine."[26]

Paying attention to the narrations and emphasis of Fatimah to hide her grave, this possibility is stronger because Baqi and around it were exposed to harassment, in a way that heads of society could exhume graves to find the grave of Zahra (a.s.), to pray at her and bury her officially.[27]. Ibn Shahr Ashub [28] and Arbali [29] also knew her home as her grave.

2.**Baqi'**: Baqi was a vast land in the east part of Medina, in its west, homes of people of Medina and east a groves.[30] By increasing the population of Medina, the homes of people were built to the border of Baqi'.

Ibn Shu'bhah Namiri, the oldest historian of Medina said that Abbas ibn Abdul-Mutallib was buried next to Fatimah bint Asad, in the first raw of Bani Hashem graves, in the home of 'Aqil[31]. This issue has been claimed by other historians of Medina. It seems that after Fatimah bint Asad, Aqil's home gradually turned into the grave place of Bani Hashem after burring Abbas there.[32] These great people are buried there: Imam Hasan Mujtaba, 'Aqil, Abdullah ibn Jafar ibn Abi Talib, imam Sajjad, imam Baqir and imam Sadiq. In Sunni traditions, there are some traditions that say the grave of Fatimah bint Asad is in fact the grave of Zahra (a.s.); though these traditions have some documentation problems.

The first one, which Sunni people referred to is the tradition of Abdullah ibn Jafar narrated from Abdullah ibn Hasan. He quoted from Abu Hashem that he heard Zahra (a.s.) has been buried in 'Aqil's home.[33] A group of Rijal scholars questioned its documentation, because Abdullah ibn Jafar (the first narrator of this tradition) is not known; in the books of Shia and Sunni Rijal, there are various people with different levels of authenticity.

The second tradition is by Mohammad ibn 'Umar Waqidi from Abdul Rahman ibn Abi al-Mawal who said the grave of Zahra (a.s.) is in a corner of 'Aqil's house.[34] Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Al-Mawal (the main narrator of this report) passed away in 173 Hijri , which was 162 years after Zahra's burial[35] and was not an eye witness of her burial, therefore her narration could not be authentic.

Other traditions have been narrated by ibn Shu'bhah Namiri who has given the most detailed reports. Most of his reports were from Abu Ghassan Mohammad ibn Yahya, which mostly believed in her burial in Baqi'. Ibn Shu'bhah Namiri

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from Mohammad ibn Yahya and he from Akramah ibn Mosab Abdari narrated that Hasan ibn ‘Ali scattered people from the east side of ‘Aqil’s home where faces Baqi’. And this report is narrated from Mohammad ibn Ali ibn ‘Umar ibn Ali ibn Husayn and from Akramah ibn Mosab Abdari, but the latter is unknown. Therefore, this news is not trustable. In addition to it, banishing people from east side of ‘Aqil’s home is not a reason. And if some say it is because of respecting Zahra (a.s.) maybe Imam Hasan did this to respect his grandmother. The other reason to say Zahra (a.s.) was buried in Baqi’ is the traditions which say imam Hasan willed to be buried next to his mother. According to a tradition from ibn Abbas, imam Hasan was buried next to his mother[36] this tradition has three documents which are doubtful: in all three, Mozahim ibn Warith is mentioned who is unknown and there is no name of him in Shia or Sunnit men. The other problem is that Mufid and ibn Shahr Ashub have narrated two other traditions from ibn Abbas which contradicted this tradition.

In Sunnit source books, ibn Shu‘bhah Namiri said imam Hasan willed to be buried next to his mother.[37] The documentation of this is doubtful because his narrator is Ubaydullah ibn Ali ibn Abi Rafi whose narrations are not reliable.[38] Biladhuri from Hisham ibn ‘Urwa and he from his father narrated that imam Hasan said on his death bed, if you are worried of burring me next to Prophet, so burry me next to my mother.[39]

Because Zubayr tribe and his sons are known as the enemies of Ahlul Bayt and fabricating traditions about them, their traditions are not regarded as reliable. Similar to this tradition is what Abul Faraj Isfahani has brought from Ahmad ibn Sa‘d who is unknown.

In addition to it, in these traditions the word Umm has been used which is also referred to grandmother. Therefore, it is possible here it is referred to Fatimah bint Asad who was Imam Hasan’s grandmother. This possibility also confirmed by those traditions saying imam Hasan willed imam Husayn to be buried next to his grandmother’s grave [40], Tabarsi,[41] and et al.[42].

Imam Hasan willed to his brother, he should be carried to the grave of Prophet to revive his pledge with him, then to his mother and then to Baqi and then buried.[43] ‘Ali in the night of her death made several graves in Baqi’ to hide the real grave.[44] People of that time, because of these graves, did not think the real grave could be in another place. And also her grave hidden place is a well-known

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historical facts. And a very few people who were present at the time of her burial knew the real place and people and governors could not realize it. Therefore, it is not acceptable that her grave became so well-known to all that even unknown people knew it. Especially her special place among Muslims and Prophet's attention to her and also her opposition with the ruling system and her will to be buried secretly raised lots of sensitivity and questions among Muslims which could create political problems for governmental systems of that time. This could provoke rumors and end up in fabrication of a lot of traditions.

3.**Rouza of Prophet**: the other possibility is Rouza of Prophet.[45] Where its east faced the house of Prophet, its west to his pulpit, from south to his praying place (mehrab) and its north based on a tradition from Imam Sadiq was four pillars away from Prophet's pulpit.[46] And Prophet named it as a gardens of gardens of heaven.[47] Sheikh Tusi and Tabarsi are of those who knew her grave to be in Rouza or her own house.

The only documented tradition in this regard is a tradition from imam Sadiq who said the holy Prophet said, there is a garden between my grave and my pulpit and my pulpit is located on a gates of the gates of heaven, because Zahra's grave is between his grave and his pulpit and her grave is a grave of graves of heaven.[48] This tradition is regarded as a weak tradition due to its documentation weakness. And also this tradition belonged to the time Prophet was alive and in that time the place of his grave was not clear. Therefore, it was impossible to make the realm of Rouza clear.

Elegy of imam Ali for losing Zahra (a.s.): According to Shia narrators, 'Ali after burring Zahra (a.s.) with tearful eyes and a burning heart approached Prophet's grave and said, " I lost my patience in missing the daughter of the selected Prophet of God . Though I have no alternative but patience. The one who was given to me in trust, was taken from me, my sorrow and grief for this parting is everlasting. Sky is dark and the earth dark and ugly, my grief is like a ablaze fire, and the pain of my heart is like a bitter injury which has no alleviation but death and reaching to your presence (Prophet's presence)." 'Ali took his complaint to God, expressing his sadness in Zahra's rights which were violated, and said God was witnessing all affairs.[49] Some poems have been narrated from 'Ali composing for this depart, and asserting he would never was able to forget this grief.[50]

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[1] Fital Neyshaburi, 151-152; Majlisi, Bihar Al-Anwar, 43/192
[2] Ibn Abdul Aziz, 4/1897-1898; ibn Athir Jazri, 5/524; Arbali, 2/126; Dhahabi, Tarikh Al-Islam, 3/48
[3] Hilali 'Amiri, 392
[4] 8/29-30
[5] Ansab Al-Ashraf, 2/33-34
[6] Tarikh, 2/448
[7] 5/28
[8]Muslim Neyshaburi, 5/154; Hakim Neyshaburi, 3/162
[9] Tabari imami, 133; Majlisi, Bihar Al-Anwar, 43/208-209
[10] 'Ilal al-Sharayah, 1/187-188
[11] 151
[12] Bihar Al-Anwar, 43/192
[13] Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, 185
[14] Muslim Neyshaburi, 5/154; ibn Shu'bhah Namiri, 1/106,110
[15] ibn Sa'd, 8/29; Arbali, 2/126
[16] ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/139
[17] Saduq, 'Ilal al-Sharayah, 1/188-189
[18] Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, 185; Tabari imami, 136; Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 43/171
[19] Tabari imami, 136-137; Majlisi, 43/171-172
[20] Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, 185
[21] ibn Sa'd, 8, 22
[22] Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar, 268; Majlisi, Rudat al-Muttaqin, 2/90
[23] ibn Shu'bhah Namiri, 1/106
[24] ibn Shu'bhah Namiri, 1/107
[25] Himyari Qumi, 367; Majlisi, Bihar Al-Anwar, 97/192
[26] Kulayni, 1/458-459
[27] Tabari imami, 136
[28] 3/139
[29] 2/124
[30] ibn Shu'bhah Namiri, 1/93
[31] 1/127
[32] ibn Najjar Baqdadi, 231
[33] ibn Sa'd, 8/30
[34] ibn Sa'd, 8/30
[35] ibn Hujr 'Asqalani, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, 6/253-254
[36] Tusi, Al-Amali, 161
[37] 1/107, 111
[38] ibn Hujr 'Asqalani, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, 7/34.
[39] Ansab al-Ashraf, 3/297
[40] Mufid, 2/17
[41] I'lam al-Wara', 1/414
[42] ibn Sabagh Maleki, 2/738-740
[43] Kulayni, 1/300
[44] Tabari imami, 136; Majlisi, Bihar Al-Anwar, 43/171, 212
[45] Tabari imami, 136; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/139
[46] Kulayni, 4/555
[47] Kulayni, 4/553-556; Tusi, Tahdhib al –Ahkam, 6/7-8
[48] Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar, 267
[49] Kulayni, 1/458-459; Mufid , Al-Amali, 281-283; Tusi, Al-Amali, 109-110
[50] Kidari, 102, 414-419; Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 43/217

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