

## **The Passing Away/Martyrdom of the Prophet of Islam**

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Dear All,

Today is the anniversary of the passing of our prophet (may our salams and Allah's peace be unto him and his holy progeny).

He lived to be 63 years old. He began his mission overtly at age 40 and spent the next 23 years of his life doing the work of guidance and giving laws to the world that was assigned to him by the Lord Almighty.

At this point, I would like to share a particular opinion about the Prophet's life and death by a very eminent Islamic scholar of 17<sup>th</sup> century India. His name was Shah Abdul Azeez, he was born in 1745 in Delhi and passed away in 1823.

Most scholars of Islamic history, mostly Sunnis, believe that the Prophet of Islam passed away after a short illness in his house. Some others believe that the Prophet was poisoned by his enemies and therefore, he was actually martyred.

Shah Abdul Azeez is one of the Sunni scholars who believe that the Prophet died of natural causes, of old age and illness. With that premise, he wrote a book. The title of the book is *Sirrus Shahadatayn*, or *The Secret of Two Martyrdoms*.

He argues in the book that the Prophet was the best human being of all times. According to the Qur'an, the most glorious death of a man is martyrdom in the cause of Islam. The Prophet being the best human being of all times, and also the prophet of Islam, should have been given the glory of martyrdom, but he died of natural causes, why?

He then argues that *shahada*, or martyrdom, is of two kinds. One, an overt martyrdom, where a Muslim dies fighting in Allah's way in a battlefield. This he labels as *shahadat-e-jahree*. And the other is *shahadat-e-sirri*, or covert martyrdom, that is when some one gives his life in Allah's way due to other causes such as poisoning.

Allah wanted to give his Prophet the glories of both kinds of martyrdom. But, a person can only die once. Therefore Allah gave two sons to the Prophet, who were actually his grandsons, being the sons of his daughter, Fatima Zahra. Hasan and Husayn being the Prophet's 'son' has been confirmed by the Qur'an in verse number 3:169.

Allah gave the covert martyrdom to Imam Hasan, he was poisoned to death. And he gave the overt martyrdom to Imam Husayn, he was murdered on the plain of Karbala in active fighting while standing up against *zulm* (*oppression*) and tyranny.

Thus, via the martyrdoms of the two grandsons, the Prophet received the glory of both kinds of martyrdoms.

The conclusion of Shah Abdul Azeez's thesis is that the martyrdom of Hasan and Husayn was actually the martyrdom of the Prophet of Islam.

You can explore the inherent ideology in this theory yourself by further reading and reflecting.

Your questions will be answered, *inshaAllah*.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Syed Mohsin Naquvi