

Chapter 1: The Great Baby

The members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, received the baby with much rejoicing and pleasure. They were very happy with him, for he was in whom the elements of the two grandsons (of the Prophet), al-Hasan and al-Husayn, mixed. Those noble origins through which Allah strengthened the Arabs and the Muslims mixed in him, too. As for the noble backbones and the pure from which he branched, they are:

His Mother

As for his mother, she was a pure chaste woman. She was Fatima, the daughter of Imam al-Hasan, the Lord of the youth of Heaven. She was given the kunya of Umm 'Abd Allah (the mother of 'Abd Allah).¹ She was among the Hashimite women. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, peace be on him, called her al-Siddiqah (the very truthful one).²

Concerning her Imam Abu 'Abd Allah al-Sadiq, peace be on him, said : “She was very truthful. No one in the family of al-Hasan looked like her.”³ It is enough for her highness that she was part of the plant of the sweet basil of the Apostle of Allah (i. e. Imam al-Hasan), and that she grew up “in the houses which Allah permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them.” She brought up Imam al-Baqir, peace be on him, in her pure lap. She poured upon him rays of her pure soul. She fed him with her noble ideas that became part of his qualities.

We have no information about the period which he spent with his mother. That is because the references have neglected that period. Besides we have no information about all of his affairs.

His Father

His father was the Lord of the prostrators (in worship) and ornament of the worshipers. He was the best of all the Muslim figures in jurisprudence, knowledge, and religious piety. We will mention a brief study on his affairs in the following researches.

The Great Baby

The world shone on the birthday of the pure Imam (Muhammad al-Baqir). The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, had given good news to him before his birth. The members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, waited for him impatiently. That is because he was among the Imams of Muslims. Namely the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, nominated those Imams. He made them leaders for his community and related them to the Quran. Imam Muhammad al-Baqir was born in Medina, on the third day of the month of Safar, in the year 56 A. H.⁴ It was said (that he was) on Friday, during the early days of the month of Rajab.⁵ He was born three years before his grandfather, Imam Husayn, peace be on him, was killed.⁶ It was said (that he was born) four years, as he, peace be on him, said, (before the murder of his grandfather).⁷ It was also said (that he was born) two years and some months (before the murder of his grandfather).⁸ The last date is unusual. No one accepts it.

The religious rituals such as adhan and iqama in his ears were performed for him when he was born. Other rites were also performed for him on the seventh day of his birth: His hair was shaved. The weight of his cut hair in silver was given to the needy as alms. A ram was sacrificed for him and was given to the poor as alms.

He was born during the time of Mu'awiya. At that time the Islamic countries were full of oppression. Moreover, they were full of disasters and misfortunes. That was because of the oppression of Mu'awiya and the injustice of his governors who spread terrorism and oppression in the country. Imam al-Baqir talked about that dreadful injustice. We will mention his speech in this book.

His Name

His grandfather, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, named him Muhammad. He also gave him the Kunya of al-Baqir. That was ten years before al-Baqir was born. That was among the Prophet's prophecies, as some researchers said. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, knew from the unseen that his grandson would do such as proclaiming knowledge among his community. Thus, he gave good news to his community about him. He also sent him his greetings through the great Companion (of the Prophet), Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari. We will mention that in the following (chapters).

His Kunya

He had only one kunya. It was Abu Ja'far.⁹ He was called by the name of his son, Ja'far al-Sadiq, peace be on him, who renewed the life of this community and split open the fountains of wisdom in the earth.

His Nick-Names

As for his nick-names, they indicate the qualities of his great character and his high inclinations. They are as follows:

1. Al-Amin (the trusted one).
2. Al-Shabih (the one who was like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family). [10](#)
3. Al-Shakir (the grateful one).
4. Al-Hadi (the one who guides).
5. Al-Sabir (the patient one).
6. Al-Shahid (the proof). [11](#)
7. Al-Baqir (the one who split open knowledge). [12](#) This is the most famous nick-name of his. He and his son, Imam al-Sadiq, were given the nick-name of al-Baqirayn (the two ones who split open knowledge). They were also given the nick-name of al-Sadiqayn (the two truthful ones). [13](#)

The historians and the biographers of the Imam have unanimously agreed on that he was given the nick-name of al-Baqir because he split open knowledge. Namely, he studied knowledge in detail. Thus, he understood its origin and its hidden (branches). [14](#) Concerning him, Imam al-Ridha' said:

“O (you) who split open knowledge (making it available) to the people of piety and the best of those who seek to answer the call of the Exalted.” [15](#)

It is as if that the people called him al-Baqir because of his great knowledge and his many sciences. It was also said that he was given the nick-name of al-Baqir because of his many prostrations (in worship). Thus, he split open his forehead. [16](#) Moreover, he was given the nick-name (of al-Baqir) because of these words of his: “The truth called me for help after the untruth had gathered it in its abdomen. So, I split open its flank and brought out the truth from its hiding, so it appeared and spread after it had been hidden.” [17](#) However, the first meaning is the most famous with the historians.

The Greetings of the Prophet to al-Baqir

The historians and the narrators have unanimously agreed that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, sent his greetings to his grandson, al-Baqir, through the great companion, Jabir b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ansari. Thus, Jabir was impatiently waiting for his birth to give him the message of his grandfather. When the Imam was born and became a grown-up, Jabir met him and gave him the greetings of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. The historians have reported that in various ways. The following are some of them:

1. Aban b. Taghlab reported on the authority of Abi ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, who said: “Indeed Jabir b. ‘Abd Allah al–Ansari was the last of the surviving Companions of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. He devoted himself to us, we, the members of the House (ahl al–Bayt). He sat at the place of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. He wore a black turban. He called out: ‘O you who will split open knowledge (baqir)! O You who will split open knowledge!’ Thus, the people of Medina said: ‘Jabir is hallucinating!’ So, he (Jabir) said: ‘By Allah, I have never hallucinated. However, I heard the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, say: ‘Indeed, you will meet a man who belongs to me. His name is similar to mine. His qualities are similar to mine. He will split open knowledge thoroughly. ‘These words have motivated me to say what I say.’ He (Abi ‘Abd Allah) said: “One day while Jabir was walking through some streets of Medina, he passed by a street. Muhammad b. ‘Ali (al–Baqir) was in the street. When he looked at him he said: ‘O boy, come.’ The boy came. Then Jabir said to the boy: ‘Turn back.’ The boy turned back. Then Jabir said: “By him in whose hand is my soul, (they are) the qualities of the Apostle of Allah. O Boy, what is your name?” The boy replied: “My name is Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al–Husayn.” Jabir kissed his head and said: ‘May my father and mother be ransom for you, your grandfather, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, sends you his greetings.’ Abi ‘Abd Allah said: ‘Muhammad came back frightened to his father and told him about what had happened. His father said to him: ‘My little boy, has Jabir done it?’ Muhammad replied: ‘Yes.’ His father said: ‘Do not leave your house, my little boy.’”¹⁸ As for the contents of this report, they are as follows:

A. The qualities and features of Imam al–Baqir, peace be on him, were similar to those of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

B. It was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, named his grandson Muhammad and gave him the nick–name of al–Baqir. (The Prophet told the People that Imam Muhammad al–Baqir) would split open knowledge completely.

C. Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin, peace be on him, feared for the safety of his son when Jabir reported the tradition of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, concerning him. That is because the Umayyad government imposed an intense observation on Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin. It counted his breaths against him. It wanted to know who would succeed him to punish him severely. So, the Imam, peace be on him, wanted the affair of his son to be secret lest the Umayyads should mistreat him or subject him to misfortunes.

2. Ibn ‘Asakir reported that Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin, peace be on him, and his son, al–Baqir came to Jabir b. ‘Abd Allah al–Ansari. Jabir asked him: “Son of the Apostle of Allah, who is with you?” “My son, Muhammad, is with me,” replied Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin. Jabir embraced Muhammad. Then he wept and said: “My death is at hand. Muhammad, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, sends you his greetings.” “What is that?” asked Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin. Jabir replied: “I heard Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, say to al–Husayn b. ‘Ali: ‘A son will be born for this grandson of mine.

The son will be the Lord of worshipers. On the Day of Judgment, a caller will call: 'Let the Lord of worshipers stand up. So, 'Ali b. al-Husayn will rise. A son will be born for 'Ali b. al-Husayn. The son will be called Muhammad. Jabir, when you see him, give him my greetings. Jabir, know that al-Mahdi will be among his sons. Know, Jabir that you will stay for a short time after him.'¹⁹

3. Taj al-Din b. Muhammad, the head of Aleppo, reported on the authority of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, who said: "I came to Jabir b. 'Abd Allah and greeted him. He said to me: 'who are you?' That was after he had become blind. I said to him: 'Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn.' He said: 'May my father and mother be ransom for you, come nearer to me.' I came nearer to him. He kissed my hand, and then he stooped down to my foot to kiss it. However, I pulled it from him. Then he said: 'The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, recites his greeting to you.' 'Peace and Allah's mercy and blessings be on the Apostle of Allah,' I said. 'How is that, Jabir?' He said: 'One day I was with him when he said to me: 'Perhaps you will live until you meet one of my descendants called Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn on whom Allah will bestow light and wisdom. Then recite to him my greetings.'"²⁰

4. Salah al-Din al-Safadi said: "Jabir walked in Medina and said: 'Baqir, when will I meet you?' One day he passed through a street in Medina. A female slave gave him the boy who was in her lap. He said to the female slave: 'Who is this?' 'Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn,' she replied. He embraced him, kissed his head and his hands, and then he said: 'My little boy, your grandfather, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, sends you his greetings.' Then he said: 'Baqir, my death is at hand.' He died at that night."²¹

5. Some Isma'ilis reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said to Jabir: "You will meet a son of this son of mine. He appointed at al-Husayn. When you meet him, give him my greetings. Say to him: O you who will split open knowledge, split it completely. "Jabir did that."²²

6. Al-Hafiz Nur al-Din al-Haythami reported on the authority of Abu Ja'far, peace be on him, who said: "Jabir b. 'Abd Allah visited me while I was reading the Book. He said to me: 'Uncover your abdomen.' I uncovered my abdomen. He kissed it, and then he said: 'Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, ordered me to give you his greetings.'"²³

These are some reports that have unanimously agreed that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, ordered Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari to send his greetings to Imam al-Baqir, peace be on him. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, knew from beyond the unseen that his grandson would spread knowledge among people and that he would split open wisdom and light in the earth.

His Features

Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari said that his features were similar to those of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.²⁴ His morals were also similar to the Prophet's high ones that distinguished him from the other prophets.

Some contemporary people have described Imam al-Baqir as follows: He was a man of medium height. He was brown.²⁵ He had soft skin with moles. He had a thin waist. His voice was good. He always bowed his head.²⁶

His Early Cleverness

Imam al-Baqir, peace be on him, was clever and genius during his childhood. The reporters said that Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari, though an old man, came to him, sat before him, and learned from him. Jabir admired the Imam's abundant knowledge and sciences. Thus, he said: "Baqir, you have been given wisdom while you are still a boy."²⁷

The Companions (of the Prophet) knew that the Imam was endowed with outstanding merits and abundant knowledge. So, they consulted him concerning the problems which they did not understand. The historians said that a man 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar about a certain problem. However, 'Abd Allah could not answer the problem. So, he said to the man: "Go to that boy, he pointed at Imam al-Baqir, ask him, and tell me about his answer." The man went to the Imam and asked him. The Imam, peace be on him, answered his problem. Thus, the man came back to 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar and told him about the Imam's answer. So, the latter admired the Imam, saying: "They are the knowledgeable members of the House."²⁸

Allah singled out the Imams of the members of the House, peace be on them, with knowledge and outstanding merits. He granted them absolute perfection which He had granted to His prophets and His apostles. The historians said that the Imam was nine years of age when he was asked about difficult problems and answered them.

His Solemnity and His Prestige

The features of the Imam, peace be on him, represented the solemnity and the prestige of the prophets. Everybody respected and admired him. For example, Qattada, the jurist of the people of Basrah, met him. Still his heart trembled because of the Imam's solemnity. Thus, he said to him: "I sit before the jurists and b. 'Abbas. My heart does not tremble because of them as it does because of you."²⁹

The Imam was the rest of Allah in His earth. Allah bestowed solemnity and prestige on His friends and His lovers. Their qualities appeared in the Imam's character. Among those who admired the Imam's solemnity was the Moroccan poet, who described the Imam, saying:

O you who was the son of him by whose tongue and eloquence people were guided and the revelation was sent down.

The Book talked about his outstanding merits. The Torah and the Bible announced his coming.

Were it not for the cessation of the revelation after Muhammad, we would say: Muhammad was the

alternative to his grandfather.

He was similar to him in outstanding merits, but Gabriel did not bring him a message.³⁰

The historians reported that nobody saw the Imam, peace be on him, laughing. When he laughed, he said: "O Allah, do not detest me."³¹ Indeed, he refrained from all that which contradicts solemnity and high character. Among his prominent qualities was that he always praised Allah. We will mention that when we talk about the aspects of his character.

The Inscription of his Ring

As for the inscription of his ring, it was: "All might is for Allah."³² He wore the ring of his grandfather, Imam Husayn, peace be on him, whose inscription was: "Surely Allah attains His purpose."³³ This indicates that he devoted himself to Allah and cleaved to Him strongly.

His Residence

The Imam, peace be on him, resided in Medina throughout his life. He did not leave it for another city. In it, he was the first teacher and great pioneer for scientific cultural movements. He used the Prophetic Mosque as school for him. There he gave his lectures to his students.

1. Thahdhib al-Lughat wa al-Asma', vol. 1, p.87. Ibn Khullakan, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol.3, p.384. Al-Mahbar, p.57. Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol.2, p.60. A'yan al-Shi'a, 1/4/464
2. Abu al-Hasan al-'Amili, Diya' al-'Amilin, vol.2. Al-Dur al-Nazim, serial 2879
3. Usul al-Kafi, vol. 1, p.469
4. Ibn Khullakan, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol.3, p.314. Tadhkirt al-Huffaz, vol. 1, p. 124. Nazhat al-Jalis, vol.2, p.36
5. Dala'il al-Imama, p.94. Farid Wajjdi, Da'irat al-Ma'arif, vol.3, p.563
6. Ibn al-Wardi, Tarikh, vol. 1, p. 184. Akhbar al-Duwal, p. 111. Ibn Khullakan, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol.3, p.314
7. Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol.2, p.60
8. Al-Husayn b. 'Abd al-Wahab, 'Yyun al-Mu'jizat, serial, 975
9. Dala'il al-Imama, p.94
10. Al-Dur al-Nazim fi Manaqib al-A'imma. Diya' al-'Amilin, vol.2. A'yan al-Shi'a, 1/4/464
11. Jannat al-Khuld. Nasikh al-Tawarikh
12. Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, vol. 1, p. 124. Nazhat al-Jalis, vol.2, p.36. Mir'at al-Jinan, vol. 1, p.247. Farid Wajjdi, Da'irat al-Ma'arif, vol.3, p.563
13. Shaykh al-Turayhi, Jami' al-Maqal
14. Yyun al-Akhbar wa Funun al-Athar, p.213. Umdat al-Talib, p. 183
15. Jawhart al-Kalam fi Madh al-Sada al-A'lam, p. 133
16. Mir'at al-Zaman fi Tawarikh al-A'yan, vol.5, p.78
17. Ibid
18. Usul al-Kafi, vol. 1, pp.496-470. Al-Kashi, Rijal, pp.27-28
19. Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh, vol.51, p.41
20. Ghayat al-Ikhtisar, p.64
21. Al-Wafi bi al-Wafayat, vol.4, p. 102
22. Masa'il Majmu'a mina al-Haqa'iq al-'Aliya wa al-Asrar al-Samiya, p.99

- [23.](#) Majjima' al-Zawa'id, vol. 1, p.22
- [24.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. 1, p.469.
- [25.](#) Akhbar al-Duwal, p. 111. Jawhart al-Kalam fi Madh al-Sada al-A'lam, 132
- [26.](#) A'yan al-Shi'a, 1/4/471
- [27.](#) Ilal al-Sharai, p.234
- [28.](#) Al-Manaqib, vol.4, p. 147
- [29.](#) Ithbat al-Hudat, vol.5, p. 176
- [30.](#) Al-Manaqib, vol.4, p. 181
- [31.](#) Safwat al-Saffwa, vol.2, p.62. Tadhkirat al-Khawas, p.349
- [32.](#) Hulyat al-Awliya', vol.3, p. 189
- [33.](#) A'yan al-Shi'a, 1/4/169

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