

History of the Shi'a in the Time of Imam Sajjad

(a) Part 1

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Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn was a living embodiment of 'Ashura as he witnessed his father, brothers, and companions cruelly massacred on the plains of Karbala. While having to live in such sorrow, the Imam lived through a difficult era as he strove to mend the socio-political conditions of his society. Throughout these events, Imam Sajjad tried to prevent corruption, as the rulers inhibited the spread of Islam through crowd manipulation.

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History of the Shi'a in the Time of Imam Sajjad

(a) Part 1

History of the Shi'a in the Time of Imam Sajjad [1](#) (a) Part 1

Sayyid Ahmad Reza Khizri et al. [2](#)

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Abstract

Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn was a living embodiment of 'Ashura as he witnessed his father, brothers, and companions cruelly massacred on the plains of Karbala. While having to live in such sorrow, the Imam lived through a difficult era as he strove to mend the socio-political conditions of his society. Throughout these events, Imam Sajjad tried to prevent corruption, as the rulers inhibited the spread of Islam through crowd manipulation.

He also accomplished his role as a guide and benefactor by teaching Islamic principles, emphasizing the concept of Imamate, resisting moral corruption, looking after the needy, and setting slaves free. His role as a spiritual guide through his practice of continuous prayers gained him the title Imam Sajjad (The Prostrating Imam) and resulted in a collection titled Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah (The Psalms of Islam). This article offers a brief biography of the Imam, a brief history of the events after 'Ashura, and the Imam's accomplishments in reviving the Muslim community.

A Brief Biography of Imam Sajjad (a)

Imam Ali ibn Husayn, the fourth Shi'ite Imam, was one of the grandsons of Prophet Muhammad (s). He is most known for his presence in Karbala on the 10th of Muharram when his father, Imam Husayn, was martyred along with his family and companions. Imam Ali ibn Husayn's extreme illness on that day resulted in his inability to participate in the battle, leaving him unharmed by the enemy.

This enabled him to be a living history of Karbala and uphold the role of Imamate after his father. In addition to his impeccable qualities, the Imam spent much of his life supplicating to God (du'a) and prostrating to Him, giving him the titles Zayn al-'Abidin ("Beauty/Best of the Worshipers") and Imam al-Sajjad. It is likely that his mother passed away when he (a) was born and the Imam (a) was brought up under the care of his father.³

There is not enough information about the Imam's childhood and youth; however, he (a) lived during the last two years of the reign of his grandfather, Imam Ali (a), ten years of the Imamate of his uncle, Imam Hasan (a), and ten years of his father's Imamate.

According to historical sources, Imam Ali ibn Husayn (a) is quoted as saying:

In the eve of Ashura, I was lying down [in my tent] and my aunt, Zaynab (a) was taking care of me [since I was ill]. At that time, my father came and recited some poems about the unreliability of this world. I understood what he meant. At that moment, I was choked with tears, but did not cry. I knew the calamity was soon to happen. When my Aunt Zaynab (a) heard my father's words, involuntarily and with an uncovered head, she stood and said, "Woe to me! I will miss my brother. I wish death had taken my life. Now I am once again losing my mother, Fatimah, my father, Ali, and my brother, Hasan." My father looked at her, repressing his grief, and said, "My sister! Be pious, for death is destined." But she went

unconscious. Imam Husayn (a) splashed some water on her face and said, "My sister! Be patient for the sake of God. Every Muslim and I must join the Prophet (s)." [4](#)

Imam Sajjad's illness started before Ashura and continued to some days after when the female relatives and companions of the Ahlul Bayt were taken captive and forced to walk from Karbala, Iraq, to the palace of Yazid in Damascus. His illness was so intense that he was unable to ride the camel, and so the enemies tied his hands, legs, and neck with chains underneath it. [5](#)

However, his illness either did not last long or at least did not prevent Imam's brave response to 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad in Kufah. This reached the point that 'Ubaydullah decided to kill Imam (a). Despite this threat, never did Lady Zaynab ask for mercy on his behalf, she was prepared to sacrifice herself for him. It was then that Imam (a) said, "Dispatch trusted men along with these women and children to Medina." Then Ibn Ziyad shamefacedly gave up on the idea of killing the Imam (a). [6](#)

A few days after the meeting with Ibn Ziyad, Imam (a) and other captives were taken from the prison of Kufa to Damascus while being harassed on the way. This journey included some of the most important events in his life: being present in Yazid's meeting, delivering his historic sermon in Umayyad mosque as he condemned Yazid's crime of massacring the progeny of the Prophet (s), and finally, returning home to Medina with a grieved caravan. [7](#)

Another significant event in his life was the Hirrah uprising in Medina resulting in a brutal war where many of the companions of the Prophet (s) and their descendants were killed; however, due to God's mercy and Imam's insight and correct position no one complained against him. [8](#)

Imam al-Sajjad lived in Medina until the end of his life when he was poisoned by the order of Walid ibn Abd al-Malik in 94 A.H. [9](#) He passed away after a few days and was buried in Baqi' cemetery in Medina. He lived for 57 years, his Imamate lasting 34 years. [10](#)

Socio-political Circumstances

The events after Ashura include the decline of the Umayyad rule, the end of the Sufyani [11](#) rule, and the rise of the Marwanis. The next phase of the period of Imam al-Sajjad deals with the governorship of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf [12](#) and the overthrow of 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr [13](#) in Mecca until the beginning of the 'Abbasid movement.

Imam Sajjad (a) was appointed the Imam when the community was experiencing a momentous time where deviousness, injustice, and worldliness were rampant. The oppressive rule of the Umayyads took significant advantage of these conditions in order to spread its political authority. Thus, the 'period strangulation' is the best description for the period in which Imam Sajjad (a) was living.

People observed how Yazid, in order to preserve his power, did not hesitate to commit any crime: he plundered the possession of the people of Medina, destroyed the Ka'bah, and was determined to kill

even the son of the holy Prophet (s). The intense fear created by the Umayyads led to a period when people lost all hope in gaining victory through armed movements.[14](#)

The assemblages of the Shi'a in Iraq and Hijaz weakened as they lost cohesiveness and production. Imam Sajjad (a) spoke of the people's depravity: "There are not so much as twenty men in Medina and Mecca who love us."[15](#)

One of the important differences between the period of Imam Sajjad (a) and the period of other Imams was that the caliphs of his time fearlessly neglected all Islamic principles by destroying the holiness of Islamic teachings. Moreover, no one dared to protest. Cruel people like Hajjaj ruled in that period. Slaughtering 120 thousand Muslims and imprisoning 80 thousand of them in terrible conditions are facts that confirm this statement.[16](#)

Regarding the cultural conditions in the period of Imam Sajjad (a), the Umayyad rulers were particularly interested in Hijaz[17](#) for various reasons. Mecca and Medina, especially Medina, was the centre of religion and piety and where the lights of Islam radiated from there to the faraway lands across the world. The people of Mecca and Medina had closely observed the Prophet (s), his companions, the Imams (a). They were also familiar with the conduct of the first Caliphs. Hijaz would be dangerous for the Umayyad rulers since uprisings could take place in Mecca and Medina.

It was the Umayyads' policy to stop Mecca and Medina from being the centre of religion and holiness. They found the only effective way was distracting people through prohibited entertainment to turn cities into centres of corruption and immorality. The prevalence of entertainment in the community was achieved through creating and spreading pleasure by including dance clubs that included music and singing.[18](#) Men and women participated in courses for dancing and singing. Gambling and prostitution were also prevalent.

The large number of these entertainers sent by the order of the Umayyad caliphs to these cities prevented people from revolting against the system, and this resulted in refraining from politics. Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah was the forerunner of the corruption in Islamic history and after him Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik and Walid ibn Yazid also played a role in the failure of the Muslims.

The Umayyad rulers also encouraged poets with luxurious gifts in order to modify their poetry and encourage them to deliver eulogies about the rulers and courtiers' merits. Of course, there were some Shi'a poets who protested against the government and defended the Ahlul Bayt (a) through their poetry and writing, though they were exposed to disfavour and rage.

Furthermore, the issue of prohibition of narrating hadiths can be counted as another cultural and ideological issue in the period of Imam Sajjad (a). The severity of rulers in prohibiting narrating and writing hadiths was to the extent that the entire Prophetic Sunnah had been forgotten.

Another factor causing alterations in Islam and Prophetic Sunnah was the presence of officially

appointed storytellers who spread false ideas in their stories.[19](#)

In such condition, which was one of the crucial stages in the history of Islam, Imam Sajjad (a) considered it his duty to rescue the people from the moral decline that had corrupted the society.

The Umayyad caliphate laid down indecent innovations (bid'ah) and traditions through non-acceptable practices by corrupt rulers. The outcomes of these innovations drove people to experience difficulties which finally led to the caliphate's demise. A few examples of these innovations and traditions are mentioned in the following:

Lawlessness

A prominent feature of the oppressors' authority was that they lacked a fair judicial system as they set laws and reigned the society in favour of their own benefits. Such actions included 1) terrorizing their subjects, 2) exerting severe punishments for oppositions, 3) issuing orders to cut pension and salary, 4) destroying homes, capitals, and properties of Imam Ali's followers, 5) limiting freedom of thought and expression, especially with respect to the leadership of the Ahlul Bayt (a), 6) the execution of great scholars and Islamic thinkers who were Imam Ali's supporters in Kufah's squares, 7) inciting disputes, 8) inciting disputes between the tribes Mudir and Rabi'ah and 9) employing poets to speak against those who opposed the ruling party.

Illustrating his disregard for social justice, Mu'awiyah told some of his agents, "Because the non-Arabs (Iranians and slaves) are increasing, I have decided to kill some of them and to dispatch some of them for revamping the roads between the cities so as to banish them from the city and the society overall."[20](#)

Preventing the spread of Islam

The ruling power crossed many of the divine limits. One way in which they did so was to eliminate Islamic socio-political rulings (ahkam). The Umayyads distorted and denied Islamic orders, creating innovation and fabricating traditions by rejection of Islamic laws (sharz'ah) in order to reach their ominous governmental goals.

Fabricating hadiths

Mu'awiyah encouraged some people to fabricate hadiths against Imam Ali (a). Abu Hurayrah, 'Amr 'As and Mughayrah were among them. Forged hadiths were created to sanctify certain personalities and to distort the prestigious position of the Ahlul Bayt (a).[21](#)

Forged hadiths were an excuse to justify the oppression of the Umayyad rulers. The following hadith is an instance:

Anyone who observes an indecent act of an agent must remain patient. And if he does not remain

patient and puts a distance between himself and the people only for a period and dies in that condition, he has died in the state of Jahiliyyah [pre-Islamic ignorance].

Determinism

One of the distinctive innovations of Mu'awiyah was to promote and spread the idea of 'determinism' so that they could legally justify their massacres. This idea could give some kind of legitimacy to Umayyad rule and repress the opposition to them.

Mu'awiyah and his son, Yazid, took advantage of this belief to hide their own crimes.

Social Manipulation

The ruling class kept people in a mental, ideological, and political vacuum while spreading propaganda through activities such as 1) preventing the spread of knowledge, both academic and Islamic, 2) limiting and canalizing scholars, 3) fabricating hadiths and offering them to the people, 4) preventing people from meeting the Ahlul Bayt (a), and 5) exiling moral intellectuals from the realm of knowledge, and replacing them with the People of the Book, thus introducing them as the people of knowledge, wisdom, and culture. The imamate of Imam Sajjad (a) began in such dreadful conditions.

Moreover, the Umayyads' policy on lowering the status of Imam Ali (a) and other Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a) were fulfilled through the following procedures:

1 – Frightening the Shi'ites so that they would only think about rescuing themselves and avoid propagating the virtues of Ahlul Bayt (a). These threats continued until the martyrdom of Imam Hasan (a). Afterwards the calamities and seditions increased so much so that everyone could face exile and destitution.²² After the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a), these problems reached its peak especially in the time of Hajjaj Thaqafi whose reign coincided the imamate of Imam Sajjad (a).

2 – Concealing the virtues of Imam Ali (a) and punishing those who narrated them.

3 – Creating a gap between the people and the Imam.

4 – Setting an economic policy for weakening the Alawids and the followers of Ahlul Bayt (a).

Imam Sajjad (a) observed the period of Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) and witnessed the time in which some people sometimes took the side of Ahlul Bayt (a) and some other times they sided with their enemies. The Imam also observed the increasing mental and political decline of the people. If we add the intense strangulation to those conditions, then we will understand why the Imam did not rise against the Umayyads.

- Indicators of deviation in the society

- Ban on narrating and writing hadiths;
- Spread of false stories and politically motivated poems;
- Inattentiveness to the Qur'an and abandoning it;
- The belief in superiority of hadiths over the Qur'an;
- The belief in authority of Companions and giving them the right of legislation and changing Islam laws;
- Promoting certain people as chief judges or chief jurists in order to suppress independent scholars;
- Spreading the idea of determinism and justifying acts of rulers, which were contrary to the Islamic law;
- Giving the absolute right of obedience to the rulers, even the oppressive ones;
- Spread of corruptions in community such as drinking alcohol, singing, music, and dancing.

As a result of the deviation in the society, many people did not follow religion, and if some did, they used to refer to the incompetent authorities and royal jurists who had been introduced as high level scholars and jurists. Their rulings, judgments, and judicial opinions were sometimes against the scriptures and sometimes they were heretics.

To sum up the people lived in severe cultural, scientific, religious, and moral poverty. This is similar to what Imam Ali (a) said describing the political, social and cultural circumstances of Islamic society in the year 40 A.H.:

لم يبق من الإسلام إلا اسمه ومن الدين رسمه

Nothing is remaining from Islam except its name and from religion except its customs.[23](#)

This was said 30 years after the demise of the holy Prophet (s) when many of Imam Ali's companions were alive. However, in the time of Imam Sajjad (a), more than 50 years after the demise of the holy Prophet (s), many of the companions had passed away and many of the Shi'a were martyred, making the conditions even worse. One of the economic policies of the Umayyads was to weaken the Alawids and the Shi'a by cutting off their pension and salary, and seize and occupy their properties, putting many of them into poverty.

Imam Sajjad's activities

Imam Sajjad (a) became Imam after the martyrdom of his father and this continued for 34 years. In order to understand the events during the lives of the Imams (a) it is necessary to analyse the political, social and cultural events that occurred. Without such recognition, the analysis of their position and policy

cannot be accurate. Those who are not able to establish a strong and logical relationship between peace and war, uprising and silence, and criticism and dissimulation (taqiyyah) of the Imams (a) risk being defeated due to their inattention to the truths and objectivities that have a significant role in the political and social policies of leaders. There was no contradiction in the teachings or conduct of infallible Imams (a). The position of the Imams (a) are divided into four parts:

Some of them clearly fought;

Some secretly fought and applied various tactics;[24](#)

Some were imprisoned for many years of their life;

Some were asked to get involved in political issues like becoming the deputy Caliph, but they did not actually get involved.

Imam Sajjad (a) was confronted by problems. Through his policy, he (a) strived to continuously revive Imam Husayn's movement and uncover the plot of those who were distorting. Furthermore, he was determined to restore the 'Alawid and Shi'ite organizations which had been damaged, and strove to strengthen and explain the roots of Islam, especially Shi'i thought. In the following, the measures Imam Sajjad (a) took to re-establish political, social and cultural sphere will be provided.

Cultural activities

In Shi'i Islam, an Imam (a) possesses superiority over all others in intelligence, knowledge, faith, and morals. His knowledge, like the prophets' knowledge, is given by God and is not through conventional methods of teaching and learning.[25](#) To explain Imam Sajjad's knowledge and its advantage over the scholars, jurists, and narrators of hadith of his time, his awareness of the hidden mysteries of the world and the relationship of people to the sheer source of divine wisdom is beyond the constraints of this article.

In any case, Imam Sajjad (a) used every opportunity to spread his knowledge. Like other infallible Imams (a), he did not cease to continue teaching under most difficult conditions. Like the rain of mercy, they irrigated the thirsty lips of the people with refreshing water from the spring of knowledge.

Imam Sajjad (a) selected the holy Prophet's (s) mosque as his school and held discussions on scientific subjects such as exegesis of the Qur'an, hadith, jurisprudence (fiqh), philosophy, theology (kalam), mysticism ('irfan) and morality (akhlaq). On Fridays, Imam (a) delivered a public speech and advised the people to be pious in this world and be mindful of the hereafter.

Abd Allah Mahd says, "My mother Fatimah would encourage me to participate in the sessions of my uncle, Imam Sajjad (a) and these gatherings increased my knowledge and God-wariness."[26](#)

Scholars revered the Imam (a) and benefitted from the vast ocean of his knowledge. They enjoyed his

presence so much that they would reluctantly leave his company. When he went for the pilgrimage (hajj), about one thousand learned people accompanied him to benefit from his knowledge.[27](#)

Imam trained many students, some of whom later became very great scholars. Baqir Shaif Qurashi has quoted the names of 164 of them who had considerable merits. They were either experts in various sciences and authors of important books or political and social figures. Moreover, some were active against the tyrants and many of them were martyred.[28](#)

Imam (a) taught subjects such as:

The concept of Imamate: The Imam defined Imamate and explained the position and the status of the infallible Imams while rejecting the wilayah (guardianship) of non-infallibles. Some of the points that can be understood from Imam's teachings in this regard are as follows:

- a) Imam is informed of the lawful (halal) and the prohibited (haram) and is responsible for presenting God's religion. Anyone who accepts his wilayah [guardianship] will be guided.
- b) It is rationally and religiously necessary to obey and follow the infallible Imams (a).
- c) The obedience to Imams (a) is one of the requirements of taqwa (piety) and taqwa is the requirement for acceptance of prayers.

Necessity of resisting moral corruption: the spread of corruption among different classes and groups of society, including some jurists, motivated the Imam (a), to fight at the same time both injustice and corruption with the means of supplications.

Remembrance of God: In his teachings, Imam Sajjad (a) stressed on the obedience to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet and encouraged people to enforcement their faith.

Enriching the culture of prayer and supplication: The Imam (a) taught deep mystical and monotheistic ideas in the form of supplications. To understand this better it is enough to refer to Al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyyah.

Unfortunately there were attempts to revive the pre-Islamic culture of ignorance (jahiliyyah) and polytheism and reintroduce some of the pagan customs again. The Imam (a) directed people's attention to the unity of Divine Attributes so that they would know that sustenance and livelihood, death and life, and fate and destiny are only in the hands of God and that they should not put their trust in the rules.

The Imam (a) continued his scientific and cultural movement in starting a tafsir (exegesis of the Qur'an), hadith, and jurisprudence (fiqh) school up until the time of Imam Baqir (a), who took this task over and made this school very established.

Theological issues: The Imam (a) held discussion with the chiefs of different sects and schools of Islam

and demonstrated the true understanding of Islam.[29](#)

Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah: This is a collection of some of the supplications of the Imam (a) that covers all that is needed for a spiritual life. It has been described as the Psalms (Zabur) of the Ahlul Bayt (a).

Risalat al-Huquq: This is another important book of the Imam (a) concerning rights, known as Treatise of Rights. This book defines rights in all positions, relationships and interactions of a person towards himself, God, other people and environment.

The Age of Jurists

As mentioned before, the Umayyads thrived on people's ignorance. That meant that any effort to increase people's awareness would threaten their rule. The Imam (a) strived to promote education in the society as he considered it a significant and necessary measure. Imam (a) was the forerunner in cultural struggle and managed to establish the school of Ahlul Bayt (a) for training jurists. Then, the school of Tabi'in (first generation after the holy Prophet who had not seen the Prophet himself but had seen his companions) was set up in Medina.[30](#) Some of its scholars were among the students of the Imam (a).[31](#)

The school of Tabi'in was established to promote Islamic rulings, but the rules were hoping to use it against the school of Ahlul Bayt (a) and therefore financially and politically supported it. They strove to challenge Imam Sajjad (a)'s indisputable knowledge and right of leadership. This period was named the Age of Jurists and Jurisprudents.

The Umayyads took advantage of poets and gave them money to praise those jurists who stood against the Ahlul Bayt (a).[32](#) The divine grace and wisdom reflected in the speeches and behaviours of Imam Sajjad (a) and his devout followers defeated all opponents and proved Imam Sajjad's outstanding knowledge. They named Imam (a):

سيد الفقهاء وافقه الفقهاء

Master of Jurists and Best of Jurists. [33](#)

Many of jurists respected the Imam's knowledge and wisdom and declared:

ما رأينا أفقه من علي بن الحسين

"We have not seen any one better than Ali ibn Husayn (a) in knowledge and understanding." [34](#)

Some jurists of that time were: Abu Hazim, Muhammad ibn Zuhari, Sufyan 'Uyaynah, Nafi' ibn Jubayr, Salim ibn 'Abdullah et al. Surprisingly many of them consecutively died and the year 95 A.H. was named "the Year of the Jurist."[35](#)

Social activities

During his Imamate, the Imam (a) made considerable efforts to rescue the society from corruption, such as immorality, poverty, discrimination and various deprivations exerted by the Umayyad rulers on people, particularly the Shi'ites.

Imam Sajjad (a) tried to guide people and solve their personal and social problems. He also reinforced faith and piety in order to minimize people's temptation to sin. In doing so, he emphasized on acts of worship to God such as supplication, the daily prayers, God-wariness and purifying one's eyes and heart from contamination with sinful acts. He was very kind and respectful with respect to children and teenagers and used to say to them, "You will be great personalities of the future." The Imam's conduct sufficed as a role model for people and whoever met him was fascinated with his conduct and manners and immediately felt attached to him.[36](#)

Imam (a) was very kind with people. He easily forgave those who wronged him, as they did so under the influence of the Umayyad propagations. However, upon witnessing his mildness, patience, and friendly behaviour, they would feel ashamed by their own behaviour.[37](#)

Many of the indigent families in Medina benefitted from the favour and munificence of the unknown man in the darkness of night. They never knew who it was until Imam (a) was martyred.

Afterwards, seeing that their needs were unattended, it was then that they understood the unknown man to be Imam Sajjad (a).[38](#)

Imam Sajjad (a) made remarkable efforts to free slaves. As mentioned in hadiths, the Imam (a) set a thousand slaves free.[39](#) He (a) would buy slaves and educate them. The slaves in turn were familiar with the Imam and were educated by his behavior and speeches.

When they were set free they were in fact noble and knowledgeable people who loved Islam and the Ah al-Bayt (a). The Imam (a) captured their hearts to an extent that some slaves preferred to serve him than to enjoy their freedom. Imam (a) not only attempted to buy slaves and free them after a time, but he also encouraged others to execute this act as well:

No faithful will ever free a faithful slave unless in return for every organ of the slave, God saves a similar organ of him safe from the fire of Hell.[40](#)

Conclusion

After patiently bearing the calamities on the plains of Karbala, Imam Sajjad (a) continued to persevere in a society faced with absolute turmoil as the people suffered under the rule of the Umayyads and later under the governorship of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. Out of their fear of the Imam's right to leadership, the rulers struggled hard to prevent the spread of Islam by eradicating people's economic, political, and social

rights.

Their oppressive measures included cutting pensions and salary, exerting severe punishment, executing great scholars, and limiting freedom of thought and expression on the authority of the Ahlul Bayt (a). They also fabricated hadiths in the favor of their rule and contributed to the spread of prohibited amusements to pacify people and keep them unaware of the truth.

Imam Sajjad (a) stood strongly against these policies through educating the people on Islamic principles, leading them towards spirituality, particularly in the daily prayers and supplications, caring for the deprived, and setting slaves free. Indeed, those who knew the Imam were deeply fond of him and took joy in benefiting from his presence, knowledge, wisdom, and piety.

1. This paper is a translation of Chapter Seven of The History of Shi'ism, vol. 1: The Period of Shi'a Imam's Presence, Qum: 2005, Hawzah wa Daneshgah and Samt Publishers.

2. M. Heidari Aqae, Q. Khanjani, H. Fallah Zadeh and R. Mohammadi under the supervision of Dr. Sayyid Ahmad Reza Khizri.

3. For more information, cf. Imam as-Sajjad (a) Jamal Niyayishgaran, p. 22.

4. Abu Makhnaf, Lut ibn Yahya, Nusus min Tarikh Abz Makhnaf, vol. 1, p. 457; Tarikh al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, p.244; Tarikh al-Tabari, vol.5, p. 420, Tabari has also quoted this tradition from Abu Makhnaf with a little difference. Imam Husayn (a) stated:

يا دهر أف من خليل

"O world! Fie on you! People are seeking and loving you in the night and day but in return, you kill them and do not change their death, but this affair [death] is in the hand of God and any living creature follows me."

5. It should be noted that Imam's illness was temporary and lasted for few days before and after the tragedy.

6. Tarikh al-Tabari, vol.5, p. 231.

7. More explanation will be given in the part political activities of Imam Sajjad (a).

8. It will be discussed in the part uprisings.

9. Shibrawi, Al-Ithaf bihub al-Ashraf, p. 143.

10. The time of his martyrdom had been narrated in 92, 93, 94, 99 and 100 AH and thus there are contradictory views about during of his life and also his Imamate; cf. Imam Sajjad (a) Jamal Niyayishgaran, p. 27-28.

11. Sufyani: descendants of Abu Sufyan; Marwanis: descendants of Marwan ibn al-Hakam.

12. A cruel governor of Iraq sent by Abdul Malik ibn Marwan in 75 AH/694 AD.

13. After the death of Imam Husayn, Ibn Zubayr returned to Hijaz where he declared himself the righteous caliph. Benefitting from the dissatisfaction among the society with the Umayyad rule, Ibn Zubayr established his power in Iraq, southern Arabia, and in the greater part of Syria.

14. Pishwaee, Mahdi, Siriyah Pishwayan, p. 238.

15. Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir, Bihar al-Anwar, vol.46, p. 143, Sharh-e Nahj al-Balaghah (Explanation on Nahj al-Balaghah), vol.4, p. 104. The original text is as follows:

وروى أبو عمر النهدي قال سمعت علي بن الحسين يقول ما بمكة و المدينة عشرون رجلا يحبنا

16. For more information on the crimes of Abd al-Malak and his agents; cf. Tarihk-e Khulafa', p.218, Ibn Athir, Ali ibn Abi al-Karam, Al-Kamil fi Tarihk, vol.4, p. 522.

17. A region in the west of present-day Saudi Arabia, better known for the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

18. There were famous singers among them such as Ma'bad, Malik ibn Abi al-Samh, Ibn 'Ayishah, Dahman, Jamilah, Ibn Sharij, Gharidi, 'Izzah al-Mila and also many other of dancers and minstrels were making such assemblages in Medina.

19. They possessed governmental office and ruler himself appointed and deposed them. They were well-known as Qass al-Jama'ah and direct people's attention to themselves.

20. Al-Haj Hasan, Husayn, Al-Imam as-Sajjad (a) Jihad and Amjad, p. 12.

21. There is an example from fabricated hadith that Abu Hurayrah had quoted from the holy Prophet (s) that: "God trusted three person about His revelation: I (the Prophet), Jibra'il and Mu'awiyah." He says that the holy Prophet (s) gave a part of revelation to Mu'awiyah and stated: "Keep this by yourself until you meet me in paradise on the day of Resurrection." Al-Imam al-Sajjad (a): Jihad and Amjad, p. 14.

22. Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh-e Nahj al-Balaghah , vol.11, p. 46.

23. Al-Sahih min Sirah an-Nabi al-A'zam, vol. 1,p. 142; Amini, Abd al-Husayn, Al-Ghadir, vol, 8, p.166; Mas'udi, Ali ibn al-Husayn, Muruj az-Zahab...,vol.3, p.85.

24. It is essential to say that political position and political measures do not mean armed struggles and serious dispute for seizing rule. In the teachings of Ahlul Bayt (a) political measure is sometimes just a kind of spiritual or intellectual leadership or the spread of familiarity with the social and individual rulings of Islam.

25.

يَا يَحْيَى خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا

"O John!" [We said,] "Hold on with power to the Book!" And We gave him judgment while still a child. (19:12)

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

... Allah will raise those of you who have faith and those who have been given knowledge in rank, and Allah is well aware of what you do. (58:11)

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ ۖ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا

Thereat she pointed to him. They said, "How can we speak to one who is yet a baby in the cradle?" (19:29)

There is a hadith of Imam Sajjad (a) about divine knowledge of the Imams (a) and its wide area as: "Indeed, Muhammad (s) was Confidant of God on the earth and when he passed away, his Ahlul Bayt (a) became his heir and also Confidant of God on the earth. The knowledge on fate and destinies of people, Arab's genealogy, the purity of their birth, the names of Shi'a and their fathers' name is by us. We are elected by God and are the Successors of the holy Prophet (S). We are more worthy to Qur'an and religion than anybody else. We are in the high level of knowledge and the knowledge of all prophets are with us. Saffar Qumi, Basa'ir ad-Darajat, p. 120.

26. Shaif Qurishi, Baqir, Hayat al-Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a), vol.2, p.264. Quoted from A'yan ash-Shi'a.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid, p.257-331.

29. Al-Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a), p. 260, Al-Hayat al-Siyasiyah lil-Imam as-Sajjad (a), p. 41. For example, with respect to the usage of analogical argument (qiyas) in fiqh, Imam (a) said:

إِنَّ دِينَ اللَّهِ لَا يَصَابُ بِالْعُقُولِ النَّاكِصَةِ وَالْأَرْاءِ الْبَاطِلَةِ وَالْمَقَائِيسِ الْفَاسِدَةِ ، وَلَا يُصَابُ إِلَّا بِالتَّسْلِيمِ ، فَمَنْ سَلَّمَ لَنَا سَلَمَ وَمَنْ اقْتَدَى بِنَا هَدَى ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يَعْمَلُ بِالْقِيَاسِ وَالرَّأْيِ هَلَكَ ، وَمَنْ وَجَدَ فِي نَفْسِهِ شَيْئًا مِمَّا نَقُولُ أَوْ نَقْضِي بِهِ حَرْجًا كَفَرَ بِالَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّبْعَ الْمِثْقَالِ وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ وَهُوَ لَا يَعْلَمُ

"By imperfect intellects, false thoughts and void analogies, no one can access God's religion. God's religion cannot be accessed except by submission (to God's will). Anyone who accepts us will be saved and anyone who follows us will be guided. And anyone who follows analogy and his personal opinions will perish and anyone who doubts what we say or rejects us has unknowingly disbelieved in God who has sent down the holy Qur'an and Seven Repeated Verses."

With respect to true understanding of God, Imam (a) says:

وعجزت العقول عن إدراك كنه جمالك وانحسرت الأبصار دون النظر إلى سبحات وجهك ولم تجعل للخلق طريقا إلى معرفتك إلا بالعجز عن معرفتك

...intellects are incapable of grasping the core of Thy beauty, eyes fail before gazing upon the glories of Thy face, and Thou hast assigned to

Thy creatures no way to know Thee save incapacity to know Thee! (Qummi, Sheikh Abbas, Mafatih al-Jinan, Supplication 12, p. 229)

[30.](#) Some of its administrators were Sa'id ibn Musayyib, 'Urwah ibn Zubayr, Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi-Bakr, Abu Bakr ibn Abd ar-Rahman ibn Harith, Sulayman ibn Yasar, 'Ubadullah ibn 'Utbah ibn Mas'ud and Kharijah ibn Zayd who were well-known as fuqahayah sib'ah (seven jurists).

[31.](#) Hayat al-Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a), vol.2, p. 414.

[32.](#) If, it is asked you: who are the ocean of knowledge? Say: they are 'Ubadullah, 'Urwah, Qasim, Sa'id, Abu Bakr, Sulayman and Kharijah. Ibid., p. 415.

[33.](#) Imam Sajjad (a) Jamal Niyayishgaran, p. 196.

[34.](#) Ibn Juzi, Abd ar-Rahman, Tadhkirah al-Khawas, p. 241.

[35.](#) Tarikh-e Tabari, vol. 5, p. 262.

[36.](#) Farzdaq says in his ode: "He is a clement person that no one fear him and two things are his ornament: good behavior and excellent ethics." Zindigani-e Ali ibn al-Husayn (a), p. 113; Imam Sajjad (a) Jamal Niyayishgaran, p.83.

[37.](#) c.f, Imam Sajjad(a) Jamal Niyayishgaran, p. 72. Hisham ibn Isma'il oppressed Imam Sajjad (a) during his ruling on Medina. When he was deposed, Walid's agents proclaimed, "Everyone who has been oppressed in the time of Hisham, tell us." Hisham feared Imam Sajjad (a) more than any other person because he knew how he treated the Imam (a). However, contrary to his assumptions, when the Imam (a) faced him, he saluted him and said to his companions, "Do not complain about Hisham because he is now weak." Al- Irshad...,vol. 2, p. 146; Tadhkirah al-Khawas, p. 295.

[38.](#) Kashf al-Ghumah..., vol. 2, p. 266.

[39.](#) Ibid., p. 279.

[40.](#) Da'a'im al-Islam, vol.2, p. 301.

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