

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (A)

The name of our sixth Imam is Ja'far (a) and he is generally remembered by the title of al-Sadiq. He was the son of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a). He was born in 83 A.H.

Imam al-Sadiq (a) was the greatest and most renowned sage of his time. He had established a school in which thousands of students received instruction in Islamic Law and other branches of learning.

Imam al-Sadiq (a) treated all human beings like his children. He generously helped the needy and the poor. It is said that once the Abbasid Caliph, Mansur, decided to kill Imam al-Sadiq (a). For this purpose he hired one hundred illiterate and uncouth persons. The plan was that he would summon the Imam and when a specified signal was given, they should cut him to pieces with their swords. However, when the Imam came all those persons showed him respect, although the necessary signal had been given to them. The hypocritical caliph also received the Imam cordially. When the Imam had left for his house, Mansur enquired from those persons as to why they had not killed him. They replied, "By Allah! We did not know that you wanted us to kill this holy person. He is as kind to us as a father and helps us day and night. How could we kill him?" Mansur had no alternative but to keep quiet.

Like other leaders of the faith, Imam al-Sadiq (a) also liked to do his work with his own hands. One day, when he was working on his farm, one of his disciples came up. He said to the Imam, "Please allow me to work for you" The Imam replied:

"Everyone must work for his own livelihood instead of depending on others".

Love and sincerity can turn the worst persons into the best friends.

Questions

1. What services did the Imam render to Islamic learning?
2. Why did the persons hired by Mansur not kill the Imam?
3. Why did Imam al-Sadiq (a) not allow his disciple to work for him on the farm?

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