

Lesson 23: The Sixth Imam And The Eighth Infallible Figure, Imam Al-Sadiq

He was called Ja'far and was known with the epithet, Sadiq. His father was Imam Baqir and his mother was Umm Farwih, who was one of the most devout women of her time. He was born on Rabi 'al-Awwal 17, 83 in Medina. He assumed leadership at the age of thirty two. He dedicated his life to educating and training thousands of students and seized the opportunity (that is, when Bani Umayyah regime was declining and fighting with Bani 'Abbas) and opened up the gates of Islamic sciences and teachings to the Muslim community.

Around 4000 people have recounted narrations from that Imam and some of them have achieved high ranks of faith and conduct.

One of them is Jabir ibn Hayyan, who is unanimously acknowledged to be the founder of chemistry. Muhammad ibn Muslim is another figure who has heard and reported thousands of *hadiths* from that Imam and the third is Hisham ibn Hakam who was the most prominent figure in rhetoric and beliefs of that time.

Mu'ali ibn khunays, who was one of the companions of the Imam, says, "On a rainy night, I noticed Imam as-Sadiq leave his house and set out toward the shelter of Bani Sa'idah where the homeless and the needy slept overnight. I also followed the Imam and all of a sudden something dropped from his hand, I went up to him and said hello. He told me to pick them up. When I bent, I realized that they were pieces of bread and I gathered them and gave them to him. He put them in a bag. I asked him to let me carry the bag but he declined and said that he was more worthy of doing that. When we arrived at that shelter, I saw a number of the poor sleeping there. He put some bread near each one of them and went past. I asked him whether they were his followers. He said if they had been his followers, he would have attended to them much more."¹

Indeed, the great Prophet, 'Ali ('a), and other leaders constantly helped the needy and the wretched and sympathized with their misery.

Imam as-Sadiq was poisoned to death by Mansur, an 'Abbasi ruler, on the 25 of Shawwal in 148 at the age of 65. He was buried at Baqi' cemetery next to the tombs of his father, Imam Baqir, and his grandfather, Imam Sajjad, and his uncle, Imam Hasan.

His Advice On Deathbed

Umm Hamidah, the magnanimous wife of Imam as-Sadiq says, "Before his death, Imam as-Sadiq opened his eyes and asked all his relatives to meet at his bed. All members of Bani Hashim got together, and then Imam glanced at them and said, "Our intercession won't benefit anyone who scorns the obligatory prayers and does not attach importance to them.""²

¹. Thawab al-A'mal by al-Saduq, Ghifari, p. 173.

². Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol.3, p. 17.

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