

[Home](#) > [The Concept of Combat in the Life of Imams](#) > Some Examples of the Struggles of the Infallible Imams

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## Some Examples of the Struggles of the Infallible Imams

Claiming the Imamate and inviting the people to accept the Imamate is observed in every aspect of the Imams' lives, which is a sign of their struggle. There are numerous traditions in this regard. For instance, the traditions titled: "Al A'imma Nurullah" ("The Imams are the Divine Light") in the book *Usul Kafi*,<sup>1</sup> and traditions of the Eighth Imam (as) on Imamate, and several traditions on the life of Imam Sadiq (as) as well as the debates of his companions with various contenders, and the traditions on the life of Imam Husayn (as) at the time of inviting the people of Iraq, and some other traditions are a few examples in this relation.

Another issue is the perception and understanding of the Caliphs of the claims and activities of the infallible Imams. From the caliph Abdul-Malik up to Motavakkil, there was always one approach to the activities, plans and objectives of the infallible Imams; therefore, they naturally used to make similar decisions about them.

This is a crucial issue and should not be simply overlooked. Why did they have such an approach to the Imam's lives? For instance: "There are two caliphs on earth; Musa ibn Ja'far is in Medina and taxes are collected for him."<sup>2</sup> Such statements about Ali ibn Musa Ridha (as) or similar statements about other infallible Imams underline the kind of objectives the caliphs and their friends thought the Imams were following. This is an important, noteworthy issue.

Another issue is the attribution of Imamate. The Caliphs insisted to attribute the Imamate to themselves, while the Shiites were sensitive to this phenomenon. For instance, a renowned poet of the early Umayyad era, Kathir was a Shiite and a sympathizer of Imam Baqir (as). He was of the rank of famous poets of that time such as Farazdaq, Jarir, Akhtal, Jamil, Nasib and others. Once he went to Imam Baqir (as).

Protesting him, the Imam said, "I have heard that you had eulogized Abdul Malik." Becoming upset, Kathir said, "I did not term him as Imam-ul-Huda' (the Guiding Imam). I only described him as a lion,

sun, sea, mountain and dragon. All these items are worthless objects." Thus, he justified his measure. The Imam smiled. Then Kumayt Assadi read out his famous ode.<sup>3</sup>

This and other examples show that the Imams were sensitive to any admiration of Abdul Malik and other oppressive caliphs. But some friends like Kathir were particularly sensitive to using such concepts as the Imam-ul-Huda (Guiding Imam) for the Caliphs. This is why he insists that he did not use the term "Guiding Imam" for Abdul Malik, which demonstrates the extreme interest of the Caliph in being called the Guiding Imam.

The insistence on and interest of the caliphs in being called the Guiding Imam was more than ever observed during the Abbasside era. Marwan ibn Abi Hafaseh Omavi<sup>1</sup> was an eulogizer and a mercenary poet of the Umayyad and Abbasside courts. Surprisingly, he was a court poet during the Umayyad and became a court poet when the Abbasside came to power! Since he was a renowned and well-versed poet, the rulers used to buy him by offering good money to him. Whenever he eulogized the Abbasside, he did not confine himself to the expression of their courage, generosity, and other characteristics, rather he used to attribute their lineage to the holy Prophet (S) to acknowledge their desired positions and statuses!

The following is one of his poems: "How is it possible that the ones who are maternal descendents of someone, inherit His uncles' inheritance?" It means that: "the uncle of the holy Prophet (S), Abbas, has a definite inheritance. Why do the descendents of the holy prophet (the infallible Imams), who are the sons of His daughter Hazrat Fatima (sa)<sup>1</sup>, want to inherit that inheritance of Abbas (i.e. Abbasside caliphate)?"

Just see, the bone of contention is the Caliphate; it is a real cultural and political war. In response, the renowned Shiite poet, Ja'far ibn Affan Tai, says: "A daughter inherits half of the father's wealth in Islam, but an uncle does not inherit anything from the wealth of one who has a daughter; hence you do not have any inheritance to claim!"

These were only few examples about the sensitivity of the infallible Imams to any claim on the Imamate.

<sup>1</sup>. Usul Kafi, Vol. 1, P. 193

<sup>2</sup>. Bihar-ul-Anwar, Vol. 48, P. 239, Tradition 48

<sup>3</sup>. See Bihar-ul-Anwar Vol.46, P. 338, Tradition 27

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