

The Eighth Imam: 'Ali ibn Musa Ridha'

Birth and Martyrdom

Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) was born on eleventh of Zil Qa'dah in the year 148 A.H., according to some narrations. His father was Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s.) and his mother was 'Ummul Banin or Najmah. His name was Ali, his nickname was Abul Hasan, and his titles were Ridha', Sabir, Razi, Wafi, Zaki, and Wali. His most famous title was Ridha'. He was martyred on the last day of Safar in the year 203 A.H. in Sanabad village of Tus and was buried there.

He lived 55 years, 35 years of which was simultaneous with his father. Imam Ridha''s (a.s.) Imamate lasted about twenty years. [1](#)

Texts Proving His Imamate

As mentioned earlier in this book, the reasons for Imamate are of two kinds; the general reasons used for proving the Imamate of any of twelve infallible Imams, and the specific reasons or explicit traditions from each of the Imams about the next imam. In this part, the traditions about Imamate of Imam Ridha' (a.s.) are cited.

Shiykh Mufid has written, "Some trustworthy, pious, and scholar narrators have narrated traditions about Imamate of Imam Ridha' (a.s.) from his father Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (a.s.), including Dawud Ibn Kathir Ruqqi, Muhammad Ibn Is'haq Ibn Ammar, Ali Ibn Yaqtin, Na'im Qabusi, Husayn Ibn Mukhtar, Ziyad Ibn Marwan, Makhzumi, Dawud Ibn Suliyman, Nasr Ibn Qabus, Dawud Ibn Zarbi, Yazid Ibn Salit, and Muhammad Ibn Sanan." [2](#)

Dawud Ruqqi said, "I told Imam Al-Kadhim (a.s.), 'May I sacrifice for you! Take my hand and save me from the Hell. Who will be our guardian after you?' Imam (a.s.) pointed to his son, Abul Hasan, and said, 'He will be your guardian after me.'" [3](#)

Muhammad Ibn Is'haq Ibn 'Ammar has said, "I told Imam Al-Kadhim (a.s.), 'Do you introduce someone

to me to learn my religious issues from him?’ Imam (a.s.) answered, ‘My son, Ali. Surely my father took me to the shrine of Messenger of Allah (S) and said, **‘O my son! The Almighty Allah stated, ‘I will create a vicegerent on earth.’** [4](#) If Allah promises, He will surely fulfill his promise.” [5](#)

Husayn Ibn Na’im Sahhaf has said, “Husham Ibn Hakam, Ali Ibn Yaqtin, and I were in Baghdad. Ali Ibn Yaqtin said, ‘I was with Abd Salih, Imam Al-Kadhim (a.s.) and he told me, ‘O Ali Ibn Yaqtin! He is Ali, my best son. I granted him my nickname (or my books).’” Hearing this, Husham said, ‘O Ali Ibn Yaqtin! How do you say this?’ Ali Ibn Yaqtin answered, ‘I say it as I heard it.’ So Husham said, ‘Surely Imamate will be for him after his father, Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.).’” [6](#)

Na’im Qabusi has said, “Abul Hasan Musa (a.s.) said, ‘My son, Ali, is the greatest, most honorable, and most beloved of my sons. He and I read the jafr, while no one can read it except the Prophet (S) or his successors.’” [7](#)

Husayn Ibn Mukhtar has said, “When Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (a.s.) was in prison, he sent us letters, saying that my eldest son should do this thing and that thing and that person cannot harm him, until I meet you or I pass away.” [8](#)

Ziyad Ibn Marwan Qandi has said, “I went to see Abu Ibrahim Musa (a.s.), when his son Abul Hasan was also there. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim said, ‘O Ziyad! He is my son; his writing is my writing, his speech is my speech, and his messenger is my messenger. Whatever he says is what I say.’” [9](#)

Makhzumi –whose mother is a progeny of Ja’far Ibn Abi Talib– has said, “Once Abul Hasan Musa (a.s.) gathered us and said, ‘Do you know why I have gathered you here?’ We answered, ‘No.’ Imam (a.s.) said, ‘Witness that my son is my successor, vicegerent, and caliph. Everyone who has a request from me, ask it from him. He will fulfill my promises. Anyone who should visit me should have his written recommendation.’” [10](#)

Dawud Ibn Suliyman has said, “I told Imam Abu Ibrahim (a.s.), ‘I fear that an accident happens and I cannot visit you. Tell me who will be the Imam after you?’ Imam (a.s.) answered, ‘My son Abul Hasan (a.s.).’” [11](#)

Nasr Ibn Qabus has said, “I told Abu Ibrahim (a.s.), ‘I asked your father about the Imam after him and he introduced you as the next Imam. When your father passed away, the people were scattered in search of his successor, but my companions and I accepted your Imamate. Now tell me who will be the Imam after you?’ Imam (a.s.) answered, ‘My son, Ali.’” [12](#)

Dawud Ibn Zarbi has said, “I took some property for Imam Abu Ibrahim (a.s.). He accepted some of it, but rejected some. I asked him, ‘Why did you reject some of it?’ He answered, ‘The guardian after me will demand it from you.’ After Imam Al-Kadhim’s (a.s.) demise, Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) sent someone to me and demanded the remaining property, so I presented it to him.” [13](#)

Yazid Ibn Salit has said in a long tradition, “Imam Abu Ibrahim (a.s.) told me in the year he passed away, ‘I will be arrested and imprisoned this year. So the Imamate will be for my son, Ali, who has the same name as Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and Ali Ibn Husayn (a.s.). He has the legacy of knowledge, patience, piety, remembrance, and religion from the first Ali, and having calamities and patience from the second Ali.’”[14](#)

Muhammad Ibn ‘Isma’il Ibn Fazl Hashimi has said, “I went to see Abul Hasan Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.), who was very sick. I told him, ‘If, Allah forbids, an incident happens to you, who should we refer to?’ Imam (a.s.) stated, ‘To my son, Ali. His writing is my writing. He will be my successor and caliph.’”[15](#)

‘Abdullah Ibn Marhum has said, “I got out of Basrah and went toward Medina. In my way, I met Imam Abu Ibrahim Musa (a.s.), who was going toward Basrah. He gave me some letters and said, ‘Take these to Medina and give them to my son, Ali. Surely, he will be my successor and vicegerent and is my best son.’”[16](#)

Muhammad Ibn Ziyad Hashimi has said, “Now the Shi’ah are obliged to follow Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) as the Imam.” He was asked about the reason. He answered, “Because Abul Hasan Ibn Ja’far (a.s.) defined Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) as his successor.”[17](#)

Hiydar Ibn Ayyub has said, “I was in Quba, Medina. Muhammad Ibn Ziyad Ibn Ali came there but he was late. I said, ‘May I sacrifice for you! Why did you come late?’ He answered, ‘Abu Ibrahim had called me along with some of the progeny of Ali (a.s.) and Fatimah (s.a.), who were seventeen people. Then he told us, ‘Witness that I define my son, Ali, as my successor in my lifetime and after my death. Surely his rule will be allowed.’ By Allah that after Musa ib Ja’far (a.s.), the Shi’ah will select his son, Ali (a.s.), as the Imam.’ I said, ‘May Allah prolong the life of Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.)! How do you say this?’ Muhammad Ibn Ziyad said, ‘O Hiydar! When Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.) defined Ali (a.s.) as his successor, he devolved Imamate to him.’” Ali Ibn Hakam says, “Nevertheless, Hiydar died while he was doubtful about Imamate of Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.).”[18](#)

Abdur Rahman Ibn Hajjaj has said, “Abul Hasan Musa (a.s.) willed to his son, Ali (a.s.), wrote a letter to him, and took sixty of the elites in Medina as witness.”[19](#)

Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Khazzaz has said, “We were going to Mecca for pilgrimage. Ali Ibn Abu Hamzah was with us, carrying his own property and goods. We told him, ‘Where do you take this property?’ He answered, ‘This is the property of Abd Salih, who has ordered me to give it to his son, Ali (a.s.). He has defined Ali (a.s.) as his successor.’”[20](#)

Ja’far Ibn Khalaf has said, “I heard from Abul Hasan Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.), ‘A blissful person is someone who sees his successor before his death. The Almighty Allah has introduced my son, Ali (a.s.), Ridha’, as my successor.’”[21](#)

Musa Ibn Bakr has said, “I was with Imam Abu Ibrahim (a.s.), who said, ‘Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) stated, ‘A

blissful person is the one who sees his successor before his death.’ Then he pointed to his son, Ali (a.s.), and said, ‘The Exalted Allah has introduced him as my successor.’”[22](#)

Ibn Fizal has said, “I heard from Ali Ibn Ja’far (a.s.), ‘I was with my brother, Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.). By Allah he was Allah’s caliph after his father. His son, Ali (a.s.) came in. Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.) told me, ‘O Ali Ibn Ja’far! He is your guardian. His relation to me is like my relation to my father. May Allah keep you steady in your religion.’ So I cried and thought to myself that my brother Musa is informing me of his death. Then he said, ‘O Ali! Allah’s destine will happen. The Messenger of Allah (S), Amiral Mu’minin (a.s.), Fatimah (s.a.), Hasan (a.s.), and Husayn (a.s.) will be my patterns.’ Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.) said this three days before he was summoned by Harunur Rashid for the second time.’”[23](#)

There are other traditions about the Imamate of Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha’ (a.s.), which are not cited here for the sake of briefness. Moreover, many miracles of Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) are recorded in tradition books, which can prove his Imamate.

[Virtues and Social Personality](#)

Like his father, Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) possessed all human virtues, being a notable character among the people of his age. Shiykh Mufid has written, “After Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s.), his son Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha’ (a.s.) became the Imam, because he was superior to all his brothers and relatives. His knowledge, tolerance, piety, and jurisprudence were clear to everyone. The masses and the elites acknowledged his virtues and perfection. His father had stipulated his Imamate.”[24](#)

He has also written, “Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha’ (a.s.) was the best, wisest, greatest, and most knowledgeable of his brothers.”[25](#) Ibrahim Ibn Abbas has said, “I never saw Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) speak harshly, stop someone’s talking, or reject someone who has a request. I never saw him stretch his foot or lean when others are present or misname his servants. He never laughed loud, rather he smiled.

When he ate he invited all his servants and even the doorman and ate with them. His sleeping was little and his wakefulness was much. He was awake most of the nights until the dawn. He fasted much. He never forgot to fast three days in month. He said, ‘Three days of fasting every month has the thawab of fasting all days.’ His alms-giving was hidden at dark nights. Anyone who thinks there is someone better than Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) is not right.”[26](#)

Ibn Sabbagh Maliki has written, “If one attends to the character of Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) it becomes clear that he has the legacy of his grandfathers, Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and Ali Ibn Husayn (a.s.). He had a lofty stance and a strong belief. His fans were so many and his arguments were so clear that the incumbent caliph, Ma’mun, placed him near himself in government. Ma’mun devolved the government after himself to Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) and married his daughter to Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.). Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) had great virtues and excellent attributes. His honorable soul was like the Hashemite and his essence was like the prophets.”[27](#)

Ziyad Ibn Marwan has said, “I was with Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (a.s.) and Abil Hasan Ridha’ was present. Imam (a.s.) told me, ‘This is my son Ali. His writing is my writing and his speech is my speech and his envoy is my envoy. Everything he says is true.’”[28](#)

Ma'mun, the Abbasside caliph, wrote a letter to Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) to devolve vice regency to him. In a part of that letter he wrote: “From the beginning of my caliphate I have always tried to find the best person for my vice regency. I found no one more deserved than Abul Hasan Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha’, since his knowledge, piety, and virtues were more than other people. He has denied the world and its lovers, preferring the Hereafter to this world. I am sure of it and everyone knows it. Hence, I appoint him to vice regency.”[29](#)

Abus Salt has said, “Ma'mun told Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.), ‘O son of Messenger of Allah! Since your virtues, knowledge, piety, and devotion to Allah were proved to me, I know you more deserved for caliphate than me.’”[30](#)

Knowledge

As it was mentioned in previous sections and proved by logical reasons and traditions, one of the major conditions of the Imam knows all religious issues. His major duty is maintaining, publishing, and enforcing religious commandments and rules. Basically, the philosophy of Imamate is fulfilling this important duty. All the Imams have done it and Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) did it in his own time.

During his twenty years of Imamate, Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) attempted for publishing religious commandments and training scholar sincere students. Because of the attempts of Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) and his sincere students and narrators many traditions were publicized, which are cited in tradition books. There are traditions from Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) in all religious issues, including monotheism, theology, Allah’s attributes, creation of the world and its philosophy, Allah’s Justice, force and option, destiny, prophet hood and its philosophy, infallibility, Imam’s knowledge, Imam’s conditions, philosophy of Imamate, ethical virtues and vices, various sins and their punishment, and different jurisprudential issues.

The tradition books contain some traditions in above-mentioned topics and many other subjects from Imam Ridha’ (a.s.). Moreover, Imam Ridha’ had debates and scientific discussions with incumbent rulers, scholars, and priests of other religions that are exactly recorded in history and tradition books. An accurate study of Imam Ridha’'s (a.s.) traditions and debates shows his real scientific stance.[31](#)

Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) trained sincere scholar students in his fruitful life. They have pursued Imam’s (a.s.) purposes, defending the religion and publishing its sciences and teachings. Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abi Nasr Baznati, Muhammad Ibn Fazl Kufi, Abdullah Ibn Jundab Bajli, ‘Isma’il Ibn Ahwas Ash’ari, Ahmad Ibn and Muhammad Ash’ari are some of the notable and trustworthy students of Imam Ridha’ (a.s.).

Hasan Ibn Ali Khazzaz, Muhammad Ibn Suliyman Diylami, Ali Ibn Hakam Anbari, Abdullah Ibn Mubarak Nahawandi, Hamad Ibn Uthman Bab, Sa'd Ibn Sa'd, Hasan Ibn Sa'id Ahwazi, Muhammad Ibn Faraj Rakhji, Khalaf Basri, Muhammad Ibn Sanan, Bibr Ibn Muhammad Azdi, Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad Hamidani, Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Qiys, and Is'haq Ibn Muhammad Hasibi were some of close companions of Imam Ridha' (a.s.).[32](#)

Abus Salt has said, "I saw no one more knowledgeable than Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha' (a.s.). Every scholar who saw him testified to his great knowledge. Ma'mun invited scholars of other religions, jurists, and lecturers to his circles to debate with Imam Ridha' (a.s.). Imam Ridha' (a.s.) overcame all of them in discussion and they confessed to his knowledge ability and their own imperfection."

Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha' (a.s.) said, "I sat inside the shrine of Messenger of Allah (S), while many scholars of Medina were present. When they could not find the answer to a problem, they asked me and I answered all their problems."

Muhammad Ibn Is'haq Ibn Musa Ibn Ja'far has narrated from his father that Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s.) told his children, "Your brother, Ali Ibn Musa, is 'alim 'ali Muhammad (Scholar of Household of Muhammad (S)). Ask him religious questions and record his answers. Surely I frequently heard from Abu Ja'far, "alim 'ali Muhammad is one of your progeny. I wish I could see him. He has the same name as Amiral Mu'minin, Ali (a.s.)."[33](#)

Raja' Ibn Abi Zahhak, who accompanied Imam Ridha' (a.s.) from Medina to Tus, says, "In every city we entered, the people came to Imam Ridha' (a.s.) for learning religious issues and asked him questions. Imam (a.s.) replied their questions with a tradition he narrated from his father from his grandfathers from Imam Ali (a.s.) from the Messenger of Allah (S)." Ma'mun says, "Yes, Ibn Zahhak! He was the best person on the earth and the most knowledgeable most pious of the people."[34](#)

'Ibrahim Ibn Abil Abbas has said, "I never saw Imam Ridha' (a.s.) unable to answer a question. I saw no one more scholar than him. Ma'mun asked him questions about various issues and he answered them all. All his answers came from the Quran. He recited the whole Quran every three days. He said, 'I can recite the Quran completely in less than three days, but I ponder about every verse and the time and place of its revelation when reciting. Therefore, it takes three days to read it thoroughly.'[35](#)

Worship

Like his father and grandfathers, Imam Ridha' (a.s.) was diligent in worship. He performed obligatory prayers early at their times with complete attendance and humility. He was accurate in performing Nafilah prayers too, never leaving vigilance and performing night prayer. He constantly engaged in reciting supplications and the Quran. Instances of his sincere worship are cited below.

Raja' Ibn Abi Zahhak said, "Ma'mun assigned me a mission to bring Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha' (a.s.) from

Medina to Tus. Ma'mun had ordered me to pass Basrah, Ahwaz, and Fars, and not to pass Qum in our way. I was ordered to watch Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) until we got Marw. By Allah I saw no one more pious, in Allah's remembrance, and fearful of Allah than him."

After performing the Morning Prayer, he sat in his praying place and recited the zikrs: subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah (Glory be to Allah, Praise be to Allah, Allah is Great, There is no deity but Allah) and salawat to Prophet Muhammad (S) until the sunrise. Then he performed sajdah and continued it until the sun arose in the sky."

Then he preached the people and narrated traditions for them until before the noon. He then performed wudu and went to his prayer place again."

After the noon adhan, he performed six rak'ahs of nafilah prayer. In the first rak'ah, he recited Suratul Hamd and Suratul Kafirun. In the second rak'ah, he recited Al-Hamd and Al-Ikhlās. In the other four rak'ahs, he recited Al-Hamd and Al-Ikhlās. After each two-rak'ahs he recited salam and recited qunut before the ruku' of the second rak'ah. Then he recited adhan and performed two rak'ahs of nafilah. Then he recited iqamah and performed the Noon Prayer. After the Noon Prayer, he said the zikrs: subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah for a while. Afterwards, he performed sajdah shukr and recited shukran-lillah (Thanks to Allah) one hundred times.

He then performed six rak'ahs of nafilah prayer with Al-Hamd and Al-Ikhlās, each two rak'ahs with a salam, and performed the qunut before ruku'. Then he recited the adhan and performed two rak'ahs of nafilah with qunut in the second rak'ah. He then recited the iqamah and performed the Afternoon Prayer.

After that he said سبحان الله subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah again. Then he performed sajdah and said alhamdulillah (Praise be to Allah) one hundred times. After the sunset, he performed wudu again, recited adhan and iqamah, and performed three rak'ahs of Evening Prayer with qunut before the ruku'. After the prayer, he engaged in reciting subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah again and then performed sajdah shukr."

When his sajdah finished, he raised and without talking to anyone he performed four rak'ahs of nafilah each two rak'ahs with one salam. He recited qunut in the second rak'ah. In the first rak'ah he recited Al-Hamd and Al-Ikhlās Surahs and in the second rak'ah he recited Al-Hamd and Al-Kafirun Surahs. After finishing the prayer, he sat and recited supplications for a while and then he broke his fast."

After about one third of the night passed, he performed four rak'ahs of Night Prayer with qunut before the ruku'. After the Night Prayer, he stayed in his prayer place and recited the zikrs subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah for a while. Then he performed sajdah shukr and went to have a rest."

In the last one third of the night, Imam Ridha' (a.s.) got up, brushed his teeth, and performed ablution for prayer, while he repeated the zikrs subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, allahu-akbar, la-ilaha-illallah. He

performed eight rak'ahs of prayer, every two-unit of which with a salam. In the first rak'ah of each prayer, he recited the Surahs Al-Hamd and Al-'Ikhlas thirty times –he performed Ja'far Tayyar prayer four rak'ahs with two salams and recited the qunut before the ruku'. Ja'far Tayyar prayer was part of his night prayer. Then he performed the remaining two-rak'ahs of night prayer. In the first rak'ah he recited Al-Hamd and Al-Mulk Surahs and in the second rak'ah Al-Hamd and Al-'Insan.”

Then Imam Ridha' (a.s.) performed shaf' prayer. He recited three times of Al-'Ikhlas after Al-Hamd surah in every rak'ah and recited the qunut in the second rak'ah. Then he rose and performed one rak'ah of watr prayer. After surah Al-Hamd, he recited Al-'Ikhlas three times, Al-Falaq, and Al-Nas surahs. He also recited the qunut before the ruku' in the second rak'ah. In this qunut, he recited this supplication: “O Allah! Bless Muhammad (S) and his progeny. O Allah! Guide us among those You have guided, cure us among those You have cured, love us among those You have loved, bless us in what You have granted us, save us from every badness You have destined for us. Surely You define destinies but Your destine is not defined by anyone. The one You love will not be humble and the one You dislike will not be dear. You are Glorious and Lofty, o our Lord!” Then he recited, “I repent toward Allah and ask Him repentance” seventy times. After the salam, he sat and recited supplications for a while.”

Before the dawn, he performed two rak'ahs of nafilah; in the first rak'ah, he recited Surahs Al-Hamd and Al-Kafirun, and in the second rak'ah, surahs Al-Hamd and Al-'Ikhlas. After the dawn, he recited 'adhan and 'iqamah and performed two rak'ahs of the Morning Prayer. After the salam, he sat and recited supplications until the sunrise. Then he performed sajdah shukr and remained in the same state until the sun rose in the sky.”

In the first rak'ah of obligatory prayers, Imam Ridha' (a.s.) recited the surahs Al-Hamd and Al-Qadr and in the second rak'ah he recited Al-Hamd and Al-'Ikhlas. However, he recited surahs Al-Jumu'ah and Al-Munafiqin respectively in the first and second rak'ahs of the Morning, Noon, and Afternoon Prayers on Fridays.”

In the Evening Prayer of Friday nights, he recited surahs Al-Hamd and Al-Jumu'ah in the first rak'ah and Al-Hamd and Al-'A'la in the second rak'ah.”

In the Morning Prayer of Mondays and Tuesdays, he recited the surahs Al-Hamd and Al-'Insan in the first rak'ah and surahs Al-Hamd, Al-'Insan, and Al-Ghashiyah in the second rak'ah. He recited the surahs loud in the Evening, Night, midnight, shaf', watr, and Morning Prayers and quiet in the Noon and Afternoon Prayers. In the third and fourth rak'ahs of prayers, he recited three times of subhanallahi wal-hamdulillahi wala-ilaha-illallahu wallahu-akbar, instead of surah Al-Hamd.”

The supplication of his qunut was this phrase, “O Lord! Forgive what we have done and have Mercy on us. Surely You are the most Honorable, the most Dear, and the most Generous.”

“Everywhere he wanted to stay ten days or more, he was fasting in days. At the sunset he first performed his obligatory prayer and then broke his fast. During his travel he performed the obligatory

four-rak'ah prayers with two rak'ahs, except the Evening Prayer that he performed with three rak'ahs. In travel or at home he did not abandon the nafilah of Evening and Night Prayers, the midnight prayer, shaf', watr, and Morning nafilah. But he did not perform Noon and Afternoon nafilah prayers on travel. After short prayers, he repeated subhanallahi wal-hamdulillahi wala-ilaha-illallahu wallahu-akbar thirty times and said, 'This zikr compensates shortcomings of the prayer.'

I never saw him perform zuha prayer in travel or at home. In travel he never fasted. At the beginning of every supplication, he recited salawat to Muhammad (S) and his Household. He repeated this zikr a lot. He recited the Holy Quran a lot at nights. When he reached a Quranic verse about the Hell or the Paradise, he wept. He sought the Paradise from Allah and sought refuge in Him from the Hell."

He recited bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the Name of Allah, the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful) aloud in all prayers. Every time he recited the verse "Say Allah is One." He quietly said, "Allah is One." After reciting this surah he said "He is our Lord" three times. When he recited surah Al-Kafirun, he said to himself, "O the disbelievers!" After finishing the surah he said three times, "My Lord is Allah and my religion is Islam."

When he recited the surah Al-Tin, he said, 'Yes, and I am a witness to this.' When he recited the surah Al-Qiyamah, he said, 'O Lord! You are Glorious! Yes.' When he recited the surah Al-Jumu'ah, after the word wattijarati (and bargain) in the verse: **"Say: *The (blessing) from the Presence of God is better than any amusement or bargain! And God is the Best to provide (for all needs),*"**³⁶ he added the phrase "...for those who are pious," of course not as a part of the verse."

After reciting surah Al-Fatihah he said, "Praise be to Allah; Lord of the worlds."

When he recited the surah Al-'A'la, he quietly said, "Glorified is our Great Lord." When he recited the Quranic verse "O you who believe" he said quietly, 'Here I am! O Allah Here I am!'"³⁷

'Ibrahim Ibn Abbas has said, "Imam Abul Hasan Ridha' (a.s.) slept little at nights and was vigilant a lot. Most of the nights, he was awake until the dawn and worshipped. He fasted most of the days. He fasted at least three days a month. He said, 'Three days of fasting a month is like fasting all one's life.'"³⁸

Almsgiving

Beneficence, alms-giving to the poor, paying the debt of the debtors, feeding the believers, and helping everyone in need were examples of tradition of Prophet Muhammad (S) and the infallible Imams (a.s.). Imam Ridha' (a.s.) continued this conduct as much as possible.

'Is'haq Nubakhti has said, "A man came to Imam Ridha' (a.s.) and said, 'Grant me as much as your greatness.' Imam Ridha' (a.s.) answered, 'I cannot afford that much!' The man said again, 'So grant me as much as my greatness.' Imam Ridha' (a.s.) said, 'This amount is possible.' Then he ordered his servant to give two hundred dinars to that man."

Imam Ridha' (a.s.) gave away all his property as charity in Khurasan on the day of 'Arafah. Fazl Ibn Sahl told Imam Ridha' (a.s.), "This granting is not proper, but harmful." Imam Ridha' (a.s.) told him, "It is not harmful, rather quite useful. Do not consider something that is given in Allah's way and for reward harm!"³⁹

Mu'ammarr Ibn Khallad has said, "When Imam Ridha' (a.s.) ate food he placed a bowl beside him, pouring the best parts of food in it. Then he ordered to give it away to the poor. At the same time, he recited this verse, ***"and that ears (that should hear the tale and) retain its memory should bear its (lessons) in remembrance."***⁴⁰

Then Imam Ridha' (a.s.) said, "The Almighty Allah knows that not everyone can free a slave, so He set the Paradise as the reward of feeding the people."⁴¹

Ghaffari has said, "A man from 'ali Abi Rafi' with a certain name had lent me some money. He asked it from me, but I could not pay it back. Therefore, I performed my Morning Prayer in the Prophet (S)'s mosque. Then I went to meet Imam Ridha' (a.s.), who was in 'Urayz⁴² then. When I reached there, I saw Imam Ridha' (a.s.) in his garment and cloak, riding a donkey. I got ashamed and said nothing. When he reached me, he looked at me. I said hello and said, 'One of your fans has lent me some money. Now he asks me the money and has brought me to ruin.' I thought that Imam Ridha' (a.s.) will recommend that person not ask his money from me. I did not mention the amount of my debt. Imam Ridha' (a.s.) told me, 'Stay here until I return.'"

I stayed there until the sunset, so I performed my prayer. I was fasting, so I got tired and wanted to return, when Imam Ridha' (a.s.) appeared with a group of other people. They asked him requests and he gave them alms. Then he entered his house and invited me too. I entered, sat beside Imam (a.s.), and talked about Ibn Musayyib, the governor of Medina. When I finished, Imam (a.s.) said, 'I think you are still fasting.' I said, 'Yes.' Imam Ridha' (a.s.) ordered to bring food for me and told his servant to sit and eat with me. Then he stated, 'Pick up this cushion and take whatever is beneath it.'"

I did as Imam (a.s.) had said and took some dinars. Imam Ridha' (a.s.) told four of his servants to accompany me to my house. I told him, 'The agents of Ibn Musayyib are guarding and I fear that they see me with your servants.' So Imam Ridha' (a.s.) confirmed it and told his servants to return whenever I told them. When I reached near my house, I told them to return."

Then I went into my house and lightened a lamp. I counted the money to find out that it was forty eight dinars, though my debt was only twenty eight dinars. One of the dinars was very shiny. I looked at it in the light and read this, 'Your debt is twenty eight dinars. The rest of the money is for you.' By Allah I was not sure how much my debt was."⁴³

Yasir, the servant of Imam Ridha' (a.s.), has said, "When Imam Ridha' (a.s.) was in his privacy, he invited all his young and old servants and talked to them closely. When he sat to eat food, he called everyone to eat with him."⁴⁴

- [1.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 247; Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, pp. 2, 3 & 29; Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 226; Al-Kafi, Vol 1, p. 486; Tarikh Ya’qubi, Vol 2, p. 453.
- [2.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 247.
- [3.](#) Al-‘Irshad, p. 248; Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 225.
- [4.](#) Surah Al-Baqarah 2: 30.
- [5.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 248.
- [6.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 249.
- [7.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 249.
- [8.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 249.
- [9.](#) Al-‘Irshad, p. 250; Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 226.
- [10.](#) Al-‘Irshad, p. 250; Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 226.
- [11.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 251.
- [12.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 251.
- [13.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 251.
- [14.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 252.
- [15.](#) Kashful Ghummah, Vol 3, p. 88.
- [16.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 15.
- [17.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 16.
- [18.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 16.
- [19.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 17.
- [20.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 17.
- [21.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 18.
- [22.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 26.
- [23.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 26.
- [24.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 247.
- [25.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 244.
- [26.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 90; Manaqib ‘Ali Abi Talib, Vol 4, p. 389.
- [27.](#) Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 225; Matalibus Su’ul, Vol 2, p. 128; Kashful Ghummah, Vol 3, p. 49.
- [28.](#) Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 226.
- [29.](#) Tadhkiratul Khawas, p. 353.
- [30.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 129; Manaqib ‘Ali Abi Talib, Vol 4, p. 392.
- [31.](#) All the traditions from Imam Ridha’ (a.s.) in various fields are recorded in a book entitled Musnad Al-Imam Ridha’ (a.s.). This book also mentions the names of narrators of hi traditions and his students, who exceed 312 people.
- [32.](#) Manaqib ‘Ali Abi Talib, Vol 4, p. 397.
- [33.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 100.
- [34.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 95.
- [35.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 90.
- [36.](#) Surah Al-Jumu’ah 62: 11.
- [37.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 91.
- [38.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 91; Al-Fusulul Muhimmah, p. 233.
- [39.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 100.
- [40.](#) Surah Al-Balad 90: 11.
- [41.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 97.
- [42.](#) A village near Medina, whose lands were mostly for the infallible Imams (a.s.).
- [43.](#) Al-‘Irshad, Vol 2, p. 255; Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 97.
- [44.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol 49, p. 164.

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