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Under the Shadows of His Grandfather and Father

Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) grew up in one of the most respected houses of Allah (SwT); a house from which the mission of Islam raised to impose knowledge on people, to civilize the nations, to honour humankind, and to glorify intellectuality.

In that house, which was the source of brilliance in the Arab and Islamic worlds, Imam al-Sadiq (as) was brought up as the most brilliant figure and the most striking leader of the intellectual and civilized revolution. Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), the grandfather, was the leader of the devout and the chief of all those prostrating themselves before Allah (SwT), used to intellectually and religiously feed Imam al-Sadiq (as) with his spirituality and holiness. He granted his grandson intellectual constituents. As for the father; namely, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (as), he implanted in his son the entire spiritual momentum and high moral standards to make him ready for the leadership of the nation in its spiritual and timely progress.

Let us now have more details about Imam al-Sadiq's (as) growth at the hands of these two Imams (as).

[Under the Shadow of His Grandfather](#)

Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as) was the greatest educator in Islam and the greatest guide of the dutiful and devout individuals. It was he who stopped the Umayyad trend and the stream of ignorance, which aimed at deforming the methodology of Islam intellectually and ideologically. Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), the heavenly inspired leader, led these defensive campaigns by means of spreading his brilliant, golden supplications whose collection is considered to be the Gospel of Muhammad's (S) family. These supplications thrilled hearts and sentiments and created an Islamic path capable of interacting with Muslims' sensations in all times and places.

This great Imam (as) did his best in teaching his grandson; he thus laid the basis of all virtuous inclinations and goodly behaviours in his grandson's inner self, making him the natural extension of his

great fathers who changed the stream of the history of humankind from ignorance, darkness and slavery into knowledge and freedom.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) passed the first stage of his life, which took about twelve years, under the protection of this grandfather, the leader of the dutiful and the chief of the worshippers. So, he understood his great lifestyle that was identical to the lifestyle of Prophets (as) and Messengers (as). He did not miss any action that would draw him closer to Allah (SwT) or any good mannerism that may take him up supremely.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) thus lived with his grandfather, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), and watched him observing fasting on days and spending nights with worship, unsettled and busy in worshipping Allah (SwT) the Exalted. People have never seen anyone similar to him in obedience to Allah (SwT), sincerity in worship, and frequent prayers and prostrations. On his organs that directly touched the ground while prostrating himself before his Lord, there were tough pieces of flesh like these seen on the limbs of camels.

His worship was so astounding that it has been the object of peoples' discourses all over ages. Imitating his grandfather Imam Ali (as), this Imam (as) worshiped Allah (SwT) due to neither desire for paradise nor fear of hellfire; rather, because he found Him the worthiest of being worshiped.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was highly affected by this shining behaviour that lit the horizons of monotheism. Therefore, he worshiped Allah (SwT) as exactly as his grandfather used to do, observing fasting on most of the days of his lifetime and spending nights with acts of worship.

More details will be demonstrated later on in this book.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) saw his grandfather in the darkness of nights carrying packs full of food or money to spend on the poor and the needy, trying not to make them know who he was. So, the grandson imitated his grandfather and followed his lifestyle in all aspects. He saw his grandfather manumitting slaves and granting them generously to the extent that they would not need anyone else's help. Then, he endued them with his knowledge and science and afterwards they would become master scholars and scientists of the society after that dark period of slavery and ignorance.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) carefully saw his grandfather, the master of the devout, overshadowed by sadness, grievance and distress, shedding tears and sighing loudly for what had happened to his father, family members and companions from the victims of the heart-striking tragedy of Karbala. Hence, the feelings and emotions of Imam al-Sadiq (as) were covered by this inherited distress.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) also observed the high mannerisms of his grandfather, which took him up to a level of perfection no reformist could reach except his forefathers.

Take a look at one of his high mannerisms: On each single day of Ramadhan, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as)

used to slaughter a ewe and distribute its meat amongst the poor after having it cooked. One day, one of his slaves carried a pot with a very hot broth. The slave stumbled over one of the children of the Imam (as) and the contents of the pot poured down on the child, causing him to die instantly.

The ladies' cries surrounded the era while the Imam (as) was offering a prayer. When he was informed, he hurried to the slave who was trembling out of fear. The Imam (as) hugged and kissed him, saying in a merciful manner: "You have had a bad idea about Ali ibn al-Husayn! You have thought that he would punish you and take revenge? Go! You are now free for Allah's (SwT) sake! Take these four thousand dinars as a gift and forgive me for the fear that you were in because of me."

What an angelic spirit he had that excelled the spirits of all the righteous servants of Allah (SwT) whose hearts were tried by Him by means of faith!

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was impressed by this sublime mannerism, which was one of the scents of Allah's (SwT) Spirit; therefore, this mannerism became part of his moral behaviour and characteristics.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) also watched his grandfather, the greatest Imam, attending to the distribution of knowledge and culture among Muslims. He always found a spiritual joy in this issue that no other joy could ever compete with. The surrounding students made use of his knowledge, as they would not leave Mecca unless Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) would have left it before them.

They used to write down his maxims, prayers and jurisprudence. Many scholars and scientists, who were largely non-Arabs, graduated from his school and began their missions of leading the scientific movement of the nation at that time.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) acted upon this brilliant blessing lifestyle and established his great university, which included thousands of students who carried the standard of Islamic culture and supplied the Islamic world with all prerequisites of progress and advancement.

Anyway, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as) educated his grandson, Imam al-Sadiq (as), granted him his own mental constituents and prepared him to lead the nation in its cultural and spiritual path.

[His Prayer for His Son](#)

The great teacher, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), played an unprecedented, vital role in education and upbringing; he used to say the following blessed prayer, which is considered one of the gifts of Prophethood, scents of Imamate, and a brilliant method of Islamic education. Hereinafter is the supplication:

O Allah (SwT), be kind to me through the survival of my children, and setting them right for me, allowing me to enjoy them! My Allah (SwT), make long their lives for me, increase their terms, bring up the smallest for me, strengthen the weakest for me, rectify for me their bodies, their religious dedication, and

their moral traits, make them well in their souls, their limbs, and everything that concerns me of their affair, and pour out for me and upon my hand their provisions! Make them pious, fearing, insightful, hearing, and obedient toward Thee, loving and well-disposed toward Thy friends, and stubbornly resistant and full of hate toward all Thy enemies! Amen

O Allah (SwT), through them strengthen my arm, straighten my burdened back, multiply my number, adorn my presence, keep alive my mention, suffice me when I am away, help me in my needs, and make them loving toward me, affectionate, approaching, upright, obedient, never disobedient, disrespectful, opposed, or offenders!

Help me in their upbringing, their education, and my devotion toward them, give me among them from Thyself male children, make that a good for me, and make them a help for me in that which I ask from Thee! Give me and my progeny refuge from the accursed Satan, for Thou hast created us, commanded us, and prohibited us, and made us desire the reward of what Thou hast commanded, and fear its punishment!

Thou assigned to us an enemy who schemes against us, gave him an authority over us in a way that Thou didst not give us authority over him, allowed him to dwell in our breasts and let him run in our blood vessels; he is not heedless, though we be heedless, he does not forget, though we forget; he makes us feel secure from Thy punishment and fills us with fear toward other than Thee.

If we are about to commit an indecency, he gives us courage to do so, and if we are about to perform a righteous work, he holds us back from it. He opposes us through passions, and sets up for us doubts. If he promises us, he lies, and if he raises our hopes, he fails to fulfil them. If Thou dost not turn his trickery away from us, he will misguide us, and if Thou dost not protect us from his corruption, he will cause us to slip.

O Allah (SwT), so defeat his authority over us through Thy authority, such that Thou holdest him back from us through the frequency of our supplication to Thee and we leave his trickery and rise up among those preserved by Thee from sin! O Allah (SwT) grant me my every request, accomplish for me my needs, withhold not from me Thy response when Thou hast made Thyself accountable for it to me, veil not my supplication from Thyself, when Thou hast commanded me to make it, and be kind to me through everything that will set me right in this world and the next, in everything that I remember or forget, display or conceal, make public or keep secret!

In all of this, place me through my asking Thee among those who set things right, those who are answered favourably when they request from Thee and from whom is not withheld when they put their trust in Thee, those accustomed to seek refuge in Thee, those who profit through commerce with Thee, those granted sanctuary through Thy might, those given lawful provision in plenty from Thy boundless bounty through Thy munificence and generosity, those who reach exaltation after abasement through Thee, those granted sanctuary from wrong through Thy justice, those released from affliction through

Thy mercy, those delivered from need after poverty through Thy riches, those preserved from sins, slips, and offenses through reverential fear toward Thee, those successful in goodness, right conduct, and propriety through obeying Thee, those walled off from sins through Thy power, the refrainers from every act of disobedience toward Thee, the dwellers in Thy neighbourhood!

O Allah (SwT), give me all of that through Thy bestowal of success and Thy mercy, grant us refuge from the chastisement of the burning, and give to all the Muslims, male and female, and all the faithful, male and female, the like of what I have asked for myself and my children in the immediate of this world and the deferred of the next! Verily Thou art the Near, the Responder the All-hearing, the All-knowing, the Pardoner, the Forgiving, the Clement, the Merciful! And give to us in this world good, and in the next world good and protect us from the chastisement of the Fire.^{[1](#)}

Have you seen this educational methodology that feeds souls with Allah (SwT) – fearing and faith and keeps them away from Satan’s deceptions?

Have you seen this high morality that the Imam (as) tried to plant into the depths of the inner selves of his sons to make them excellent exemplars of Islamic education?

The Imam (as) prayed healthy religion for his sons so that they would not be easy targets of straying trends.

He prayed Allah (SwT) to make his sons steady and balanced in their behaviours so that they would be the delight of his eyes and his assistants in worldly affairs. It is quite natural that any father will be proud of his offspring when they have good moral behaviours and avoid disobedience; otherwise they would turn the lives of their parents into unbearable inferno.

The excellent education of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), the grand educator and successor of Prophethood, for his offspring was a comprehensive methodology of Islamic upbringing, which achieves the most important issues to which humankind desire, such as distribution of virtue and perfection amongst people.

Towards Immortality

Taking the Imam’s (as) virtue, devoutness and attention to fulfil his obligations towards Allah, no one throughout history can be resembled to Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), except his fathers, the great Imams (as), who enlightened the world with true guidance, good mannerism and accuracy in religious affairs.

The life of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as) could be seen as school for teaching virtue and faith and as foundation of refinement and reformation. His manners and lifestyle would always encourage on getting rid of malicious tendencies and being interested in nobilities of character. There was no trait by which souls shine and selves soar to sublimity except that it was found in perfect form in the personality of this great man.

This divinely inspired Imam (as) was the object of respect and veneration of all people, because he was the remaining example of Prophethood and the best example of the righteous, pious, and devout ones. Truly happy was he who could meet the Imam (as) and had the honour of sitting or speaking with him. This was very hard-to-accept by the Umayyad ruling authorities, the most spiteful group towards the Prophetic family.

They were troubled by the high respect of people towards the Imam (as); therefore, they happened to be anxious about his priority and the fact that he deserved governing Muslims more than themselves. One of the most spiteful enemies of the Imam (as) was al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, the licentious and wanton, who stated the following in front of the crowd:

“There is no comfort for me as long as Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) is still alive.”

This viperous man decided to assassinate the Imam (as) to have the government and authority solely.

Therefore, al-Walid – the descendent of maliciousness and malignancy – was determined to perform the most dangerous crime in Islam. He sent a deadly poison to his representative in Yathrib and commanded him to put that for the Imam (as) secretly.

Poison was one of the most prevalent methods used by the Umayyad rulers to assassinate their rivals. The first to have used this method was Muawiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan who employed poison for the assassination of striking Islamic personalities including Imam al-Hasan (as), the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S). Muawiyah was the owner of the following phrase:

“Allah (SwT) has soldiers from honey.”

Hence, Muawiyah, his successors, and his cousins followed the same way to assassinate everyone they feared.

The representative of Yathrib did what he was ordered to do and used poison for the assassination of the Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as). The Imam's (as) body was weak due to long worship and weeping for what had happened to his father in Karbala, which can be described as nothing other than a huge disaster, that even mountains are liquefied.

Towards the Paradisiacal Abode

The poison infected the body of Imam (as) and his condition started changing. When he understood that he was close to the next life, he named his son, Imam al-Baqir (as), as the next Imam and religious referential authority for the Islamic world. He thus gave him many instructions and advises, including the following:

My son! I advise you of what my father had advised me when he was about to pass away. He told me: “Son! Beware of wronging one who cannot find any supporter against you except Allah (SwT).”

The conditions of the Imam (as) became worse and worse; he was suffering from the pains of the poison. He lost consciousness three times. Afterwards, he recited Surah (Chapter of the Holy Quran) al-Waqiah and Surah al-Fath. He then said:

All praise is due to Allah, Who has made good to us His promise, and He has made us inherit the land; we may abide in the garden where we please; so goodly is the reward of the workers.

(39:74)

Then, his pure and immaculate soul left his body, happy and satisfied; and the Other World was shone by his coming while this world became gloomy owing to his departure.

This great Imam (as) strongly faced the Umayyad's sweeping trends that aimed at destroying Islam and worked painstakingly for enrolling its pennon. But Imam (as), due to his spiritual mannerism that shook all people's hearts for its prophetic holiness, tried to powerfully confront the Umayyad's attempts that planned to extinguish the light of Islam.

The Imam's (as) Funeral

Imam Abu Jafar al-Baqir (as) undertook the mission of washing the pure body of his father to make it ready for the funeral ceremony. All the attendants could see his organs of prostration as tough as camels' organs of sitting, because of his very frequent prostrations for his All-great Creator. They also noticed that the Imam's (as) shoulder was also injured, leaving a sign like those found on a camel's knee (which it uses to sit). They were thus astonished about this; they wanted to know the reason of these marks. Imam al-Baqir (as) answered that these were the result of the packs of food and money, which he used to carry on his shoulders to distribute amongst the poor and needy.

Having completed the process of washing the dead body, Imam al-Baqir (as) wrapped his father's body in a shroud and performed the obligatory prayer for him. The dead body was carried with statements of Takbir (professing Allah's (SwT) being the Greatest) and Tahlil (professing Allah's (SwT) being the one and only god) towards the cemetery of Baqi al-Gharqad.

The funeral ceremony was very magnificent and no such great ceremony was ever seen before. All people, good and bad, attended the ceremony and the crowds were around the holy corpse weeping from their deep hearts, because they felt the loss of a unique spiritual character. They went on recollecting his virtues, outstanding traits and great services to Islam.

In His Last Destination

The holy corpse was brought to al-Baqi Cemetery, and a grave was dug close to the grave of his devout uncle, Imam al-Hasan (as). Then Imam al-Baqir (as) buried his father's body in his last destination. He was full of sadness and sorrow. He buried the charity, devoutness and patience with his father.

After the burial service, people hurried towards Imam al-Baqir (as) expressing their warm sympathy and participation in his grief. Then, the Imam (as) left accompanied by great sadness.

Imam al-Sadiq (as), who was young, watched his father's grief for his grandfather; therefore, he had a part in that grief, because he had lost the most lovable and kind person to him.

After the death of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), Imam al-Baqir (as) received the spiritual and religious leadership of the nation. So, he began the distribution of the sciences and laws of the Islamic code of religious laws.

In conclusion, Imam al-Sadiq (as) lived with his grandfather, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as), the master of the devout, and watched his blessed mode of life, which was a copy of the lifestyles of the Prophets and Messengers. Certainly, no one in the Arab world as well as the whole world can ever be compared with this Imam's (as) idealities and mental constituents such as knowledge, piety, forbearance and steadfastness against astounding events.

This divinely inspired and great Imam (as) transferred all the aspects of his spirit and mental constituents to Imam al-Sadiq (as), his grandson, so that this Imam (as) would be the extension of him and his grandfathers who changed the course of history and established the message of Allah (SwT) on the earth.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was heavily affected by the mode of life of his grandfather; he therefore became his match in idealities.

Under the Shadow of His Father

Imam al-Sadiq (as) spent nineteen years with his father, who was one of the shining stars of the Prophet's (S) Household, the figures of this world and the founders of the features of civilization in the Arab and Islamic world.

This great Imam (as) paid special attention to the upbringing of his son, Imam al-Sadiq (as). He endued him with nobilities of character, by which man can sublimely advance, and fed him with his devoutness and sciences so that his son would take the leadership of the nation after him.

Let us now demonstrate some issues of Imam al-Sadiq (as) under the shadow of his father.

At the University of His Father

Since infancy, Imam al-Sadiq (as) attended the lectures of his father, which were conducted at the Prophet's (S) Mosque and his house's hall. These lectures were not just around the Islamic religion; rather, they included cosmological philosophy and life phenomena.

Due to his outstanding genius and intelligence, Imam al-Sadiq (as) excelled all the other students and

experienced scientists who were attending the lectures of his father, as was witnessed by Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz in front of al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik when he once visited Medina. This was to the extent that when some striking scholars had problems in understanding any part of his father's lectures, they used to refer to Imam al-Sadiq (as) so that he can explain.

Love and Praise

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (as) acted extremely sincerely towards his son who surpassed all others in virtues, piety, and knowledgeability. The father thus stated an excellent set of sayings, praising the excellence of his son: Here are some of these saying:

1. Aboul-Sabbah al-Kinani has reported: "Abu Jafar (as), once, watched Abu Abdullah (as) walking and said: 'Can you see this one? He is of those about whom Almighty Allah says:

"And We wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them heirs. (28:5) ""

In this tradition, Imam al-Baqir (as) emphasized the next Imamate of his son.

2. Tahir has reported: "I was with Abu Jafar when his son, Jafar, came. The Imam (as), referring to his son, said:

'This is the best creature.'"

Indeed, Imam al-Sadiq (as) is the best of all creatures in full meaning. He is the best in knowledge, piety and accuracy in religious affairs. He is also the best creature in the services and kindness that he provided for the nation.

His Advices to Imam al-Sadiq (as)

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (as) supplied his son, Imam al-Sadiq (as), with a collection of advices, which are the extract of his experiments and the essence of wisdom:

1. He said:

"My son! Allah (SwT) has hidden three things in three things: He had hidden His satisfaction in obedience to Him. So, do not belittle any act of obedience, as it may lead to His satisfaction. He has also hidden His wrath in disobedience. So, do not belittle any act of disobedience to Him, as it may bring about His wrath. He has hidden His holy men amongst His creatures. So, do not belittle any of His creatures, as one may be from those holy men."

This advice is full of urging on obedience to Allah (SwT) and warning against committing any act of disobedience to Him. It has also comprised encouragement to respect all people and to avoid scorning

anyone.

2. Imam al-Sadiq (as) has narrated one of his father's advices to Sufyan al-Thawri, saying:

“O Sufyan! My father advised me to do three things and to avoid three others. He therefore said: ‘O Son! One who accompanies bad companions will not be safe; one who follows paths of wickedness will be accused (of wickedness); and one who cannot control his tongue will regret.’”

Then he stated the following verses:

Habituate your tongue to say only good things, and you will gain it

Tongue is easily habituated to what we want it to perform

It is accustomed to receive what you give it

Of good or bad; so, consider what you should accustom

This advice is a striking wisdom that is full of all components of decencies and virtues as well as elevating traits.

Imam al-Sadiq's (as) Obedience to His Father

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was the most obedient, respectful and courteous to his father. He used to say:

“Allah (SwT) would alleviate death agonies of those who are dutiful to their parents. The best of acts is obedience to parents.”

He believed that to gaze at one's parents for a long time is sort of disobedience to them. He is also reported to have said:

“One characteristic that a noble person should adhere to is to leave his place for his parents.”

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was really ideal in obeying and respecting his father who was one of the most brilliant characters in the world in virtue, piety and accuracy in religious affairs.

With His Father in Sham

Imam al-Baqir (as) and his son, Imam al-Sadiq (as), departed Yathrib towards Damascus due to summons of Husham ibn Abd al-Malik. The reason originated from the event that when Imam al-Sadiq (as) was performing the ritual Hajj with his father, Husham ibn Abd al-Malik was performing the Hajj, too. Imam al-Sadiq (as) stated the following in the presence of some people among whom Maslamah ibn Abd al-Malik, Husham's brother, was attendant:

“All praise be to Allah (SwT) who sent Muhammad (S) as a Prophet and honoured us with him. We are the choice of Allah (SwT) over His creatures and the best among His slaves. Therefore, a true happy will be him who follows us, but the unhappy will be him who dissents and contradicts us.”

Maslamah became very angry when he heard that speech of the Imam (as). So, he hurried to his brother, Husham, and informed him about the case. Husham kept that confidential and did not have bad words with the Imams (as) in Hijaz until he returned to Damascus. Then, he ordered his representative to summon the Imam (as) and his father.

When they arrived in Damascus, Husham prevented them from meeting him for three days, as a kind of mockery. In the fourth day, he allowed them to meet him. When they presented themselves before him, he did not pay them due respect. The session was crowded with individuals from the Umayyad dynasty as well as the ruler's viziers and retinue. The ruler's companions had set up a dartboard, which was targeted by the celebrities of Umayyah.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said that Husham said, "O Muhammad (as)! Participate with the great people of your tribe in this game."

"I am too old to aim! May you exclude me from this game," my father answered.

"I swear by Him Who granted us dignity through His religion and through His Prophet Muhammad (S), I will not exclude you," Husham shouted.

This tyrant had thought that the Imam (as) would fail in shooting and this would be a reason for degrade the Imam's (as) great personality in front of the masses of Sham. He made a sign to one of the Umayyad celebrities to give the bow to the Imam (as). The Imam (as) took the bow and the arrow at the same time. Then, he put an arrow on the bow and hurled towards the target and it reached the center of the dartboard. The second arrow was placed on the back of the first one and divided it into two pieces. The Imam (as) went on hurling nine arrows each of which hit the back of the previous. This does not happen even with the best hurler in the world.

Husham was left in an extremely anxious mode as a result of his event. He could not control himself and shouted: "O Abu Jafar (as), you are the best hurler of all the Arabs and non-Arabs; yet you pretended that you were too old!"

Afterwards, he became regretful for insulting the Imam (as); he thus bowed his head down, while the Imam (as) was on his feet. When this took long, the Imam (as) became angry as his holy face showed this. He used to look at the sky whenever he would be angry. When Husham noticed so, he stood up, hugged and seated him to his right side.

Then he said: "Muhammad (as)! As long as Quraysh has someone like you, it remains the greatest of all the Arabs and non-Arabs. How great your hurling was! Who taught you such hurling? How long did it take you to learn this? Does Jafar (as) have the same competence in hurling?"

"We inherit perfection," Abu Jafar (as) replied.

The tyrant ruler aroused; his colour turned into red and he bowed his head down looking for something

to answer to what he had just heard from the Imam (as). After a moment, he raised his head and started saying: “Are we and you not of the same lineage; that is the ancestors of Abd Manaf?”

“We are,” the Imam (as) said refuting this claim, “But Allah (SwT) has characterized us by His profound secret and gave His knowledge to us other than anyone else.”

Husham asked again, “Allah (SwT) sent Muhammad (S), who is from the Abd Manaf, to all peoples including the white, the black and the redskins. How have you then obtained what others have not; while the Messenger of Allah (S) was sent to the entire humankind? This is confirmed by Allah’s (SwT) saying, ‘To Allah (SwT) belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth.’ So, from where did you inherit this knowledge while there is no other prophet to come after Muhammad (S) and you are not prophets?”

The Imam (as) retorted with reasonable causes, saying, “Almighty Allah said to his Prophet (S): ‘Move not thy tongue concerning the Quran to make haste therewith.’ So, he who did not move his tongue to other than us was commanded by Allah (SwT) to give this knowledge exclusively to us. Therefore, he (i.e. the Prophet (S)) used to hold confidential talks with Ali (as), his brother, other than any one of his companions. A verse of the Quran was revealed confirming this meaning. Hence, Allah (SwT) says, ‘The retaining ear might retain it.’ After that, the Prophet (S) said, ‘I had asked Allah (SwT) to make Ali (as) this retaining ear.’

Therefore, Ali used to say: ‘The Messenger of Allah (S) taught me one thousand horizons of knowledge; each horizon opens before me one thousand doors to knowledge.’

This means that the Holy Prophet (S) gave Ali (as) exclusively areas of the hidden secret of Allah (SwT) that none else of his people was given. This knowledge reached us and we, exclusively, inherited it through generations.”

Husham was awfully annoyed; he angrily said: “Did Ali (as) know the Unseen Knowledge? How come he said so while Allah (SwT) does not allow anyone to be aware of His unseen secrets?”

The Imam (as) responded with the shining truth of the life of Imam Ali (as), the leader of wisdom on the earth, “Allah (SwT) sent to his Prophet (S) a Book containing what happened and what will happen until the coming of the Resurrection Day. Allah (SwT) said:

‘We have sent down to thee the Book explaining all things’ (16:89)

He also stated:

‘And of all things have We taken account in a clear Book of evidence.’ (36: 12)

His Majesty also said:

‘Nothing have we omitted from the Book.’ (27:75)

He also mentioned:

***'Nor is there aught of the unseen, in heaven or earth, but is (recorded) in a clear record.'* (27:75)**

Allah (SwT) inspired his Prophet (S) not to hide any of his secrets from Ali (as). Afterwards, the Prophet (S) ordered Ali (as) to write down the Holy Quran after his passing away and to accept the washing and embalmment of his body without his tribe. He has also stated the following to his companions: 'It is a sin for my tribe and companions to look at my genital organs except my brother and son-in-law, Ali (as). He is from me and I am from him. What I have is his and what he has is mine. He will settle my debts and fulfil my promises.'

Then he said to his companions: 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib (as) will fight for the sake of true interpretation of the Quran as I fought for the sake of its revelation.' No one had a perfect and all-comprehensive interpretation of the Quran that Ali (as) had. The Holy Prophet (S) also stated: 'The most versed of you all in judgment is Ali (as).' Umar ibn al-Khattab said, 'Had it not been for Ali (as), Umar would have certainly exposed perdition.' Umar witnesses this and others are denying"

Husham bowed his head after listening to these undeniable reasons that allowed no more debate. Then he said: "You may now say your need?"

The Imam (as) did not ask for anything, but he said: "I left my wife and family anxious about my departure."

This tradition shows the status of his grandfather, Imam Ali (as), in the view of the Holy Prophet (S). Imam Ali (as) was the inheritor of the Prophet's (S) sciences, the fulfiller of his promises, and the one who undertook the mission of preparing for his funeral ceremony. However, this appreciation was hard-to-accept for Husham, the most malicious enemy of the Imam (as), and for those who did not want any respect and sedateness for him.

Closing the Shops in the Face of the Imam (as)

Husham the tyrant ordered Imam Abu Jafar (as) and his son, Imam al-Sadiq (as), to leave Damascus, fearing that people would be attracted by them. He also ordered shops and markets of the city, which were located on their way, to be closed and not to sell anything to them. He wanted to have the Imam (as) die. The caravan moved on the desert as it was tired by thirst and hunger. When the Imam (as) approached some cities, the citizens hurried to close their shops. At the time, the Imam (as) climbed up a mountain and said loudly:

"O cruel citizens of the city! I am what is left from Allah (SwT) on the earth, Allah (SwT) says:

***'That which is left you by Allah is best for you, if ye (but) believed! But I am not set over you to keep watch!'* (11:86)"**

As soon as the Imam (as) finished his speech, one of the graybeards of the city shouted loudly: “O Tribe! This is truly the invitation of Prophet Shuayb (as). I swear by Allah (SwT), if you do not open up your shops for this man, you will be punished from the sky and the earth. Just trust and obey me in this matter and then deny me in anything else, for I am advising you sincerely.”

The tribesmen were scared and accepted the request of the old man and hurried to open their shops. Then, the Imam (as) bought whatever he wanted to buy. This way the trick of the tyrant ruler and what he maliciously planned was spoiled. When Husham was informed about the unsuccessfulness of the plot, he became very furious; he went on planning other plots for the Imam (as). He finally poisoned him, as we will mention later on.

Towards Immortality

The news of the Imam’s (as) passing away was rapidly distributed in the Islamic society and people talked about his distinguished knowledgeability and highness of his moral standards as well as his being the worthier of leading Muslims and the Muslim nation than the Umayyad ruling tyrants who violated all that which Allah (SwT) has prohibited. Of course, this was very hard for the Umayyads in general and for Husham ibn al-Hakam who was the most spiteful towards the Imam (as).

This man was extremely enraged for what he frequently heard about the virtues of the Imam (as), the spread of his merits, the veneration and respect of all Muslims for him, and their preferring him to anyone else, because the Imam (as) was the most eminent figure in the exalted family of the Holy Prophet (S).

For these reasons, the tyrant planned to poison the Imam (as); he therefore sent poison to his representative in Yathrib, who gave it to the Imam (as). The poison infected the holy body of the Imam (as) heavily and he was rapidly getting closer to death.

Nominating Imam al-Sadiq (as) for the Next Imamate

Imam al-Baqir (as) nominated his son, the object of pride of this world and the pioneer of intellect and knowledge in Islam, for the next Imamate. So, he dictated that his son, Imam Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq (as), would be the next Imam and referential authority of the Muslim nation after his death. He asked the Shiah to obey him and adhere to his commands.

Traditions on this nomination have been uninterruptedly reported by numerous reporters, such as the following:

1. Husham ibn Salim has reported the following from the master jurisprudent, Jabir ibn Yazid al-Jafi:

“When Abu Jafar (as) was asked about the next one to undertake Imamate, he touched Abu Abdullah (as) by his hand and said: ‘I swear by Allah (SwT), this is the next one from Muhammad’s (S) Household

to undertake Imamate.”

2. Aban ibn Uthman narrated that Aboul-Sabbah al-Kinani has reported: “Abu Jafar (as), once, watched Abu Abdullah (as) walking and said:

‘Can you see this one? He is of those about whom Almighty Allah says:

“And We wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them heirs.” (28:5)”

3. Ali ibn al-Hakam mentioned the following:

Tahir has reported: “I was with Abu Jafar (as) when his son, Jafar (as), came. The Imam (as), referring to his son, said, ‘This is the best creature’”.

There are many such traditions that indicated the Imamate of Imam al-Sadiq (as) and asked the nation to accept his spiritual leadership and guidance.

His Advice to Imam al-Sadiq (as)

Imam Abu Jafar (as) gave a collection of advices to his son, Imam al-Sadiq (as). Among these are the following:

1. “O Jafar (as)! I advise you to do your best regarding my companions.”

Imam al-Sadiq (as) replied, “May I be accepted as your ransom! I, by Allah (SwT), will never let any one of them need anyone financially even if they are in a strange country.”

The Imam (as) paid much attention to the scholars and jurisprudents among his companions; he therefore ordered his son to cover all their needs and to manage their financial affairs so that they would not be distracted from obtaining knowledge, recording his traditions, and spreading his knowledge and mannerisms among people.

2. Imam al-Baqir (as) asked his son to coffin him with the shirt that he used to put on when he performed the prayers so that this shirt would honestly witness for his having worshipped Allah (SwT) markedly.

3. Imam al-Baqir (as) endowed part of his property to mourners who would mourn him for ten years at Mina.

The reason for this endowment might go back to the fact that as long as Mina is the place of the greatest gathering of Muslims, mourning the Imam (as) at that place would stimulate Muslims to ask for the reason for such mournful ceremonies. Therefore, they would be answered that the mourned Imam (as) had suffered various sorts of persecutions at the hands of the Umayyad rulers and thus, these ruling

authorities would not be able to keep this matter hidden.

The Last Will

Imam al-Sadiq (as) narrated his father's will as follows:

“When my father was about to die, he asked me to call some witnesses! I brought four witnesses from the tribe of Quraysh among them was Nafi, the manumitted slave of Abdullah ibn Umar. In their presence, he asked me to write down the following: This was what (Prophet) Jacob (as) left as legacy to his sons: ‘O my sons! Allah (SwT) hath chosen the Faith for you; then die not except in the Faith of Islam.’”

Muhammad ibn Ali's (as) will to Jafar ibn Muhammad (as) is this: He orders him to shroud him in his cloak in which he used to perform the Friday prayer, to put his turban on him, to make his grave a square, to raise it the height of four fingers above the ground, and to take his shabby clothes away from him at his burial.

Then he said to the witnesses: “Depart, may Allah (SwT) have mercy on you.” “Father,” Imam al-Sadiq (as) said to him (after they had gone), “What was in this that there had to be witnesses for it?”

“My son,” he answered, “I was unwilling for you to be overcome and for it to be said that no testimony had been made for him. I wanted you to have proof.”

Towards Paradise

Death approached the Imam (as) swiftly; the poison acted on all parts of his holy body and the severe pain was hurting his body, which had become weaker because of very much praying and distribution of sciences. When he felt the imminence of death, he began reciting the Holy Quran, praying Allah's (SwT) forgiveness and asking him for more forgiveness and pleasure. While he was engaged in so, inescapable death came upon him and his great soul moved towards its Creator – that pure soul that enlightened the intellectual and scientific life of Islam; the soul that had no parallel in that age.

By Imam al-Baqir's (as) death, the most magnificent page of Islamic history was enrolled – a page that supplied the Muslim community with all components of awareness and progress.

Funeral of the Imam (as)

Imam al-Sadiq (as) accomplished the necessary customs of funeral; he washed the holy corpse of the Imam (as) and put it in shrouds while he was weeping for losing his father whose patience, scientific life and devoutness in religion were unique at that time.

In the Last Abode

Imam al-Baqir's (as) great corpse was carried from al-Humaymah², where he passed away. This ceremony was attended by the masses that were repeating the statements of Takbir and Tahlil and mentioning the Imam's (as) virtues, acts of kindness and the invaluable services that he had made to this nation. His corpse reached a place called Baqi al-Gharqad where a grave was made ready neighbouring the graves of his great father, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (as) and his father's uncle, Imam al-Hasan (as), the chief of the youth of Paradise.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) put his father's corpse in his last location and as he covered the body with dust, he in fact covered the whole knowledge, virtue, favour, and piety.

The passing away of this great Imam (as) was one of most disastrous losses for Imam al-Sadiq (as) who lost a father who was one of Allah's (SwT) signs in his creativity and intelligence and who did his best in spreading knowledge and crystallizing the cultural awareness amongst Muslims.

Muslims' Condolence to Imam al-Sadiq (as)

The people who attended the funeral ceremony hurried to express their sympathy to Imam al-Sadiq (as) for the heavy disaster and tried to have a share in the sad and unfortunate loss of that great Imam (as) who had filled the world with his knowledge and wisdom.

One of those attending the funeral was Salim ibn Abi-Hafsah who came with a number of his companions. He asked them to allow him to express their sympathies to the Imam (as) on their behalf. When he approached the Imam (as), he said:

To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return. He has left us who would not be asked to mention the series of reporters between him and the Messenger of Allah when he reported anything from the Messenger of Allah directly. By Allah, none like him will be ever seen.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) thanked him for his sympathy. He paused for a while, turned his face towards his companions and then said:

"Almighty Allah says: Some of My servants may give as alms half a date and I rear it for him as same as you rear a little pony of yours."

Preoccupied by astonishment, Salim left the Imam (as) and said to his companions, "I have never seen more astonishing thing than this! It was hard for us to accept Abu Jafar's reporting directly from the Messenger of Allah; and now I see Abu Abdullah (his son) reporting directly from Allah!"

However, Salim did not realize that the tradition of Imam al-Sadiq (as) was derived from the tradition of his fathers who had received their knowledge from their grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S).

Anyway, Imam al-Sadiq (as) took the responsibility of leading the nation after his father and became the supreme referential authority for Muslims. Jurisprudents and narrators gathered around him to grasp various kinds of knowledge and sciences. He in his turn had a positive and active role in distributing the sciences, crystallizing the Arabic and Islamic thoughts with different aspects of science.

[1.](#) Quoted from the English version of al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah; translated by William C. Chittick; published by Ansariyan Publications.

[2.](#) Al-Homaymah is a village outside Medina, which belonged to Ali ibn al-Abbas and his sons during the Umayyad dynasty. Imam (as) passed away there.

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