

"I have no power save to knock at Thy door, and if I be turned away, at what door shall I knock? In full abandon I put my trust in Thee, Stretching out my hands to Thee, a pleading beggar."

Imam Shafi

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY:

Birth Name: Jafar ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Husayn

Passed away in: 148 H

In depth:

Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq was the son of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, son of Hazrat Imam Zainul Abideen, son of Hazrat Imam Hussain, son of Hazrat Ali bin Abi Talib.

Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq was born on the 8th of Ramadan in the year 83 H. His mother was the daughter of al-Qasim, whose great grandfather was Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique.

He spent his life in worship and acts of piety for the sake of Allah. He rejected all positions of fame in favor of 'uzla' or isolation from the lower world. One of his contemporaries, Umar ibn Abi-l-Muqdam, said, "When I look at Hazrat Imam Jafar bin Muhammad I see the lineage and the secret of the Prophet Muhammad united in him."

He received from the Prophet, two lines of inheritance: the secret of the Prophet through Hazrat Ali and the secret of the Prophet through Hazrat Abu Bakr.

In him, the two lineages met and for that reason he was called "the Inheritor of the Prophetic Station" (Maqam an-Nabuwwa), and 'the Inheritor of the Truthful Station' (Maqam as-Siddiqiyya)."

In him was reflected the light of the knowledge of Truth and Reality. That light shone forth and that knowledge was spread widely through him during his lifetime.

Hazrat Imam Jafar narrated from his father, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, that a man came to his grandfather, Imam Zainul Abideen, and said, "Tell me about Abu Bakr!" He said, "You mean as-Siddiq?" The man said, "How do you call him as-Siddiq when he is against you, the Family of the Prophet?" He replied, "Woe to you. The Prophet called him as-Siddiq, and Allah accepted his title of as-Siddiq. If you want to come to me, keep the love of Abu Bakr and Umar in your heart."

Hazrat Imam Jafar said, "The best intercession that I hope for is the intercession of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq."

From him is reported also the following invocation: "O Allah, You are my Witness that I love Abu Bakr and I love Umar, and if what I am saying is not true may Allah cut me off from the intercession of Muhammad ."

He took the knowledge of Hadith from two sources: from his father through Hazrat Ali and from his maternal grandfather Hazrat Qasim.

Then he increased his knowledge of Hadith by sitting with Urwa, Aata, Nafi and Zuhri. The two Sufyans, Hazrat Sufyan Thawri and Sufyan ibn Uyayna, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifa, and al-Qattan all narrated Hadith through him, as did many others from later Hadith scholars. He was a Mufassir al-Qur'an or master in exegesis, a scholar of jurisprudence, and one of the greatest Mujtahids (qualified to give legal decisions) in Madinah Sharif.

Scholars who either attended Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq's lectures or studied with him include Imam Abu Hanifa & Imam Malik.

Hazrat Imam Jafar acquired both the external religious knowledge as well as the internal confirmation of its reality in the heart. The latter was reflected in his many visions and miraculous powers, too numerous to tell.

Some anecdotes

One time someone complained to al-Mansur, the governor of Madinah, about Hazrat Imam Jafar.

They brought him before Mansur and asked the man who had complained, "Do you swear that Jafar did as you say?" He said, "I swear that he did that." Hazrat Imam Jafar said, "Let him swear that I did what he accused me of, and let him swear that Allah punish him if he is lying." The man insisted on his complaint and Hazrat Imam Jafar insisted that he take the oath. Finally the man accepted to take the oath. No sooner were the words of the oath out of his mouth than he fell down dead.

Once he heard that al-Hakm bin al-'Abbas al-Kalbi crucified his own uncle Zaid on a date palm. He was so unhappy about this that he raised his hands and said, "O Allah send him one of your dogs to teach him a lesson." Only a brief time passed before al-Hakm was eaten by a lion in the desert.

Imam Tabari narrates that Wahb said, "I heard Layth ibn Saad say, I went on pilgrimage in the year 113 H., and after I prayed the afternoon obligatory prayer (Asr Namaaz) I was reading some verses of the Holy Qur'an. I saw someone sitting beside me, invoking Allah saying 'Ya Allah, Ya Allah...' repeatedly until he lost his breath. He then continued by saying 'Ya Hayy, Ya Hayy...' until his breath was again lost. He then raised his hands and said, 'O Allah, I have the desire to eat grapes, O Allah give me some. And my robe (jubba) is becoming so old and tattered, please O Allah grant me a new one.' Layth bin Saad continues, 'he had hardly finished his words before a basket of grapes appeared in front of him, and at that time, there were no grapes in season. Beside the basket of grapes, there appeared two cloaks more beautiful than I had ever seen before.' I said, 'O my partner, let me share with you.' He said, 'How are you a partner?' I replied, 'You were praying and I was saying Ameen.' Then Hazrat Imam Jafar said, 'Then come and eat with me,' and he gave me one of the two cloaks. Then he walked off until he met a man who said, 'O son of the Prophet, cover me because I have nothing but these tattered garments to cover me.' He immediately gave him the cloak that he had

just received. I asked that man (who had asked to be covered), 'Who is that?' He replied, 'That is the great Imam, Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq.' I ran after him to find him but he had disappeared."

Someone once asked Ja'far Al-Sadiq to show him God. The Imam replied, "Look at the sun." The man replied that he could not look at the sun because it was too bright.

Ja'far Al-Sadiq replied: "If you cannot see the created, how can you expect to see the creator?"

From his knowledge he used to say to Hazrat Sufyan Thawri, "If Allah bestows on you a favour, and you wish to keep that favour, then you must praise and thank Him excessively, because He said, "If you are thankful Allah will increase for you" [14:7]. He also said, "If the door of provision is closed for you, then make a great deal of istighfar (begging forgiveness), because Allah said, "Seek forgiveness of your Lord, certainly Your Lord is oft-Forgiving" [11:52].

And he said to Sufyan, "If you are upset by the tyranny of a Sultan or other oppression that you witness, say "There is no change and no power except with Allah," (la hawla wa la quwwata illa-billah) because it is the key to relief and one of the Treasures of Paradise."

From his sayings:

- "Allah Almighty & Exalted told the lower world, "Serve the one who serves Me and tire the one who serves you."
- "Prayer is the pillar of every pious person; Pilgrimage is the Jihad of every weak one; the Zakat of the body is fasting; and the one who asks for Allah's grants without performing good deeds is like one trying to shoot an arrow without a bow."
- "Open the door of provision by giving donation; fence in your money with the payment of Zakat; the best is he who wastes not; planning is the foundation of your life, and to act prudently is the basis of intellect."
- "Whoever makes his parents sad has denied their rights on him."
- "The jurists are the trustees of the Prophet . If you find the jurists sticking to the company of the Sultans, say to them, 'this is forbidden,' as the jurist cannot express his honest opinion under the pressure of the Sultan's proximity."
- "No food is better than God's fear and there is nothing better than silence; no enemy is more powerful than ignorance; no illness is greater than lying."
- "If you see something you don't like in your brother try to find from one to seventy excuses for him. If you can't find an excuse, say, 'there might be an excuse but I don't know it.'"
- "If you hear a word from a Muslim which is offensive, try to find a good meaning for it. If you don't find a good meaning for it, say to yourself, 'I do not understand what he said,' in order to keep harmony between Muslims."

His passing away

Hazrat Imam Jafar passed away in 148 H. and was buried in Jannatul Baqi, in the same grave as that of his father, Imam Mohammad al-Baqir, his grandfather, Imam Zainul Abideen, and the uncle of his grandfather, Imam Hussain ibn Hazrat Ali.

He passed on the Secret of the Golden Chain to his successor, Hazrat Tayfur Abu Yazid al Bistami, more commonly known as Hazrat Bayazid Bustami.