

# IMAM SADIQ: ROLE MODEL FOR HUMANITY, PART II

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**ABSTRACT:** Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sādiq was renowned by both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims for his virtues, education, and accomplishments. He was above all known for teaching Shi'a Islamic fiqh, called Ja'fari jurisprudence, and his all-encompassing information which had a great academic influence. Part I included a brief biography of his life, his conduct, and his deep knowledge in jurisprudence; it also delved into the state of the Shi'as during his time as well as his political confrontations with the Ghulat, or extremists, who held ideas that resulted from overstating particular Islamic beliefs. This part continues with material on Shi'a jurisprudence according to Sunni narrations, the Imam's hadith collections, his debates, and his political confrontations given the pressures facing the Shi'a during that time.

## **The bolster of Shi'a jurisprudence according to Sunni narrations**

The era of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq was the era of expansion of the knowledge of the Ahlul Bayt in various fields. This matter applies more to Imam Sadiq because part of his Imamah coincided with open political atmosphere, a result of a political vacuum caused by the destruction of the powerful Ummayyid Empire and the rise of the Abbasids. The

Imam directed the total and complete attention of the Shi'as towards the Ahlul Bayt and discouraged them from documenting other peoples' narrations; this act was the most important reason behind the formation of Shi'a jurisprudence. Its importance was relayed to a certain extent before and during Imam Baqir's lifetime. Nonetheless, here we will conduct an overview of the point emphasized by Imam Sadiq regarding this matter. The Imam said the following in a narration: "O Shi'a, ponder upon the effects of the Messenger of God and his way of life and the effects of the holy Imams from the Ahlul Bayt."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, Imam Sadiq told Yunus bin Dhabyan: "Oh Yunus, true knowledge is with us, the family of the Prophet, for we have inherited the ways of wisdom and the method of detecting right from wrong."<sup>2</sup>

In *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, Shaykh Hurr Amuli wrote a chapter titled: "The Obligation to Refer to an Infallible in all Jurisprudential Matters"<sup>3</sup> which entails narrations from the Imams regarding this subject.<sup>4</sup>

A follower of Imam Sadiq, Aban bin Taghlib explains the Shi'a faith as such:

The Shi'a are the people whom when a difference of opinion regarding a saying from the holy Prophet arises, they take the words of Amir al-Mo'minin and when a difference of opinion regarding a saying from Imam Ali

<sup>1</sup> *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 18, p. 23 and 61, narrated from *Rawdha al-Kafi*, p. 5:

ايتا العصابة عليك باثار رسول الله (ص) و سنته و آثار الائمة الهداة من اهل بيت رسول الله(ص)..

<sup>2</sup> *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, vol. 18, p. 48:

يا يونس ان اردت العلم الصحيح فعندنا اهل البيت فاتا ورتنا و اوتينا شرع الحكمة و فصل الخطاب .

<sup>3</sup> باب وجوب الرجوع في جميع الاحكام الى المعصومين

<sup>4</sup> *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 41.

arises, use the narration of Ja'far bin Muhammad al-Sadiq.<sup>5</sup>

Yunus bin Ya'qub told Imam Sadiq, "I heard you prohibit the science of theology." In response the Imam said, "I said: Woe to him who abandons that which I say and goes toward that which they want to go towards."<sup>6</sup> For this reason the Imam would advise his followers to keep an eye out for each other; moreover he said, "God bless he who revives our instructions."<sup>7</sup>

Imam Sadiq would recount his tradition for his Shi'a and Sunni students and they would in turn record his narrations. The Sunnis would report the narration beginning with: "From Ja'far bin Muhammad, from his fathers, from the Messenger of God" and with the citation and chain of narration. The Shi'as cited their sources beginning with "From Abi Abdullah" without citing the chain of narration due to the Shi'a belief in the infallibility of the Imams and the authoritativeness (*hujjiyah*) of their sayings. Nonetheless, the Imam insisted that his narrations were none other than the Prophet's own narrations:

My narration is my father's narration and my father's narration is my forefathers' narration and my forefathers' narration is Ali ibn Abi Talib's narration and Amir al-

<sup>5</sup> Rijal al-Najashi, p. 9:

الشيعة الذين اذا اختلف الناس عن رسول الله اخذوا بقول علي و اذا اختلف الناس عن علي اخذوا بقول جعفر بن محمد

<sup>6</sup> Kafi, vol. 1, p. 171; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 45:

اذا قلت ويل لهم ان تركوا ما اقول و ذهبوا الى ما يريدو

<sup>7</sup> Refer to Tarikh Jurjan, p. 170, 264, 265, 405, 570:

رحم الله من احبب امرنا

Mu'minin's narration is the Prophet's narration and the Prophet's narration is Allah's command.<sup>8</sup>

Abu Zuhrah struggled to gather a set of leading narrators for Imam Sadiq to link him, other than through his pure lineage, to the Prophet; the only instance he found was with the name of Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr.<sup>9</sup> However, if Imam Sadiq were to narrate like other renowned narrators of that era – such that we see in *Tadhkirah al-Huffadh* that each narrator mentions at least ten people as their leading narrators (*shaykh al-riwayah*) – through leading narrators other than his family line to the Prophet, he would have introduced his leading narrators, which he did not do. Rather, we find that he has only narrated traditions from his forefathers, which we cannot consider them as leading narrators.

The Imams emphasized this matter from the very beginning; that they do not have leading narrators and their knowledge originates from a source other than that of normal narrators. In describing this, Amir al-Mu'minin says:

My righteous genealogy and pure family is the most patient of people in their childhood and the most knowledgeable of people in their adulthood. We, the Ahlul Bayt, have received our knowledge from the knowledge of Allah and decree that which Allah has decreed and have heard the Prophet's truthful sayings. If you follow us and our works you will be guided through our insights; the

<sup>8</sup> Kashf al-Ghummah, vol. 2, p. 170; Kafi, vol. 1, p. 5:

حديثي حديث ابي و حديث ابي حديث جدى و حديث جدى حديث على بن ابي طالب و حديث على  
حديث رسول الله (ص) و حديث رسول الله (ص) قول الله

<sup>9</sup> al-Imam Sadiq, Abu Zuhra, p. 88-90.

flag of justice is with us, thus whoever follows it will reach the truth and whoever turns their back to it will drown in misguidance.<sup>10</sup>

Imam Sadiq said:

With us, the Ahlul Bayt, is something that with it we have no need of people but people have need of us. With us is a book that the holy Prophet dictated and Amir al-Mo'minin transcribed; a book that contains all jurisprudence including the lawful (*halal*) and unlawful (*haram*) rulings.<sup>11</sup>

In this case, it would be unfair for anyone to introduce Shi'ism as a composition of various opinions and ideas, prone to many illusions.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, Imam Sadiq says the following when examining the common narrators of his time:

After the Prophet, people chose the way of the heart; thus they changed the religion of Allah and swerved it away from its actuality, and they added things to it and took away from it. Therefore, that which is currently in their

<sup>10</sup> 'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 4, p. 67, narrated from al-Imam al-Sadiq, Muhammad Jawad Fadhlullah, p. 90:

الا ان ابرار عترتي و اطائب ارومتي احلم الناس صغارا و اعلمهم كبارا الا و انا اهل البيت من علم الله علمنا و بحكم الله حكمنا و من قول صادق سمعنا فان تتبعوا آثارنا تهتدوا بصائرنا، معنا راية الحق من يتبعها لحق و من تأخر عنها غرق.

<sup>11</sup> Kafi, vol. 1, p. 241, narrated from al-Imam al-Sadiq, Fadhlullah, p. 95:

ان عندنا ما لا نحتاج معه الى الناس و ان الناس ليجتاجون الينا و ان عندنا كتابا املاء رسول الله و خطه على (ع) صحيفه فيها كل حلال و حرام.

<sup>12</sup> Abu Zuhrah, al-Imam Abu Hanifah, p. 111

hands is the distorted version of that which was revealed by Allah.<sup>13</sup>

Narrations (*riwayah*) of Shi'a Imams have penetrated Sunni jurisprudence as well and many of their narrators (*muhadithin*) have narrated traditions from Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq, in which a portion of them have been cited in their collection of traditions (*hadith*) and a great number of traditions can be found in Sunni books that at times are similar – at times in exact wording or similar content – to narrations reported from the Ahlul Bayt.<sup>14</sup>

### **Collections of hadith in the time of Imam Sadiq**

After the passing of the Prophet, writing hadith was banned such that for many years after people were reluctant to write narrations. Even some Sunni narrators would refrain from writing hadith in the third century of Hijrah.<sup>15</sup> In opposition to this method, from the very beginning, the family of the Prophet encouraged their companions to write hadiths and preserve it from going extinct.<sup>16</sup> Like the way of his forefathers, Imam Sadiq also emphasized this point. Although during the time of the Imam a group of people had started to gather traditions (*hadith*) and write them, many were still reluctant regarding this matter. Alongside mentioning that Imam Sadiq was an advocate for writing

<sup>13</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 140:

انّ الناس بعد نبي الله ركب الله به ستة من كان قبلكم فغيّروا و بدلوا و حزفوا و زادوا في دين الله و نقصوا منه فما من شيء عليه الناس اليوم الا و هو متحرف عما نزل به الوحي من عند الله.

<sup>14</sup> Refer to al-Shaykh Muhammad Qansuh, *al-Riwayat al-Mushtarikah*, published by the Organization for Islamic Propagation.

<sup>15</sup> *Tadhkirah al-Huffadh*, vol. 1, p. 461 and 382-441; *Jami' al-Bayan al-'Ilm*, vol. 1, p. 78-79; *Sunan al-Darimi*, vol. 1, p. 119 and 120.

<sup>16</sup> *Tabaqat al-Kubra*, vol. 6, p. 168; *Taqeed al-'Ilm*, p. 89-90; *Rabi' al-Abrar*, vol. 3, p. 294; *al-Taratib al-Idariyah*, vol. 2, p. 246 and ... and refer to article on the History of Writing Hadith, Nur 'Ilm, Second Edition, Issues 9, 11 & 12.

hadith, Abu Zuhrah claims that this matter was prevalent at the time, such that Malik bin Anas compiled his hadith collection *al-Mawta* during that time.<sup>17</sup> If we accept that Malik wrote *al-Mawta* during that period, it is clear that such an act was contradictory to the societal norm of that time, such that Abu Hanifah has refused even the slightest act regarding this subject. He said, "I have seen the study of the reporters of hadith (*rijal al-hadith*) and have learned traditions from them, but Ja'far bin Muhammad is a book." When Imam Sadiq heard of this talk he laughed and said, "He is right. I am a book; I have read the book of my ancestors and the book of Ibrahim and Musa."<sup>18</sup>

Relying on his forefathers' books shows that the Imam inherited a book from his ancestors and this in itself is an explicit conformation of this truth: that Shi'a jurisprudence was backed by written traditions from the time of the Prophet. In this regard, tens of narrations have been reported in Shi'a books of narration which proves the Imams would narrate traditions from this book of narrations for the people and at times were insisted upon people to see it.<sup>19</sup>

Many traditions have been reported from Imam Sadiq in regards to encouraging companions to record traditions in which this, in and of itself, shows that the inclination to write traditions at the time of the Imam was very weak. It has been reported that Imam Sadiq said, "Write whatever you know and distribute it amongst your brothers, and when you are to die, leave your books for your children as inheritance."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Abu Zuhrah, *al-Imam al-Sadiq*, p. 95

<sup>18</sup> *Rawdhat al-Jannat*, vol. 8, p. 169

<sup>19</sup> *Furu' Kafi*, vol. 7, p. 95-98 and 77; *Makatib al-Rasul*, p. 73 and 76; *Rijal Najashi*, p. 255

<sup>20</sup> *Kashf al-Mahajjah*, Ibn Tawus, reported from *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 2, p. 150; *Kitab al-'Ilm*:

اكتب و بث علمك في اخوانك فان مت فوژت كتبك بنيك

### **Imam Sadiq and Sunni debates on jurisprudence**

The Shi'a jurisprudential school of thought in some ways differs from that of Sunni jurisprudence. During the period of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq, jurisprudence was expanding various debates on the implementation of general jurisprudential laws upon new issues; furthermore, issues that still did not have a ruling were brought forth. During this time, the necessity for *ijtihad* (decision-making process in Islamic law through personal effort) arose among the Sunni school of thought and they started the process of deduction and deriving certain rules (*istinbat*) from narrations to find ruling.

The Sunni's main problem was the lack of sufficient resources for narration.<sup>21</sup> The existing narrations – also memorized by people scattered in various and remote cities – in terms of content had many disparities among them. It was these narrations that made the problem even more drastic and it was for this reason that the Sunni scholars, through deeming the acts of the caliphs and companions (*sahabah*) lawful and even the generation of Muslims born after the death of the Prophet (*tabi'een*), that Sunnis scholars were able to solve this matter to a certain extent. In regards to the weakness in narrated traditions in sects other than Shi'a Islam, Imam Sadiq said:

These individuals who consider themselves to be experts in Islamic Law (*faqih*) and scholars of Islam, and have derived (*istinbat*) all the jurisprudential and religious issues and all that which the people are in need of do not know anything of the knowledge of the Messenger;

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<sup>21</sup> The main reason for this was that after the passing of the Prophet, writing narrations (hadith) was forbidden.



nothing from the Prophet has reached them. When inquiries regarding the rulings on the lawful and unlawful acts are asked from them, no trace from the Prophet is found with them in that matter.<sup>22</sup>

This weakness in Sunni narrations and their reliance of the acts of the *sahabah* and *tabi'een* weakened their jurisprudential foundation, since the differences of opinions and preferences between the *sahabah* and the *tabi'een* were so great that gathering the views and Islamic rulings (*fatwa*) was made very difficult. Abu Zuharah writes the following about the era Abu Hanifah and Imam Sadiq resided in:

During that time, narrations that pertained to rulings of the companions were so numerous that the Islamic jurists were completely engaged in the matter, such that they considered their narrations their guiding light in deriving religious rulings and were strongly influenced by it.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to relying on the companions' and *tabi'un's* way of life (*sirah*), Sunni scholars also introduced another source for religious rulings; the most important of which was *qiyas* (the process of deductive analogy). In justification of relying on *qiyas*, a Sunni scholar proposed the lack of corpus of *ahadith* and clear legal injunction (*nass*).<sup>24</sup> Imam Sadiq expressed this exact viewpoint at the time and in continuation of

<sup>22</sup> Tafsir 'Ayyashi, vol. 2, p. 321, ط اسلاميه; *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, vol. 18, p. 40:

يظنّ هولاء الذين يدعون انهم فقهاء علماء انهم قد اثبتوا جميع الفقه و الدين فما يحتاج اليه الاممة و ليس كل علم رسول الله علموه و لا صار اليهم من رسول الله (ص) و لا عرفوه و ذلك ان الشيء من الحلال و الحرام و الاحكام يرد عليهم فيسألون عنه و لا يكون عندهم فيه اثر عن رسول الله.

<sup>23</sup> al-Imam Abu Hanifah, p. 105:

و لقد كثر المأثور من فتاوى الصحابة في ذلك العصر كثرة عظيمة شغلت عقول الفقهاء و اتخذوها نبراسا في اجتهادهم فتأثروا بها في اجتهادهم

<sup>24</sup> Mustafa Hamd al-Zurqa', al-Madkhal al-Fiqhi al-'A, vol. 1, p. 74, narrated from Nur 'Ilm Magazine, number 10, p. 55.

the aforementioned narration, in regards to the lack of Sunni traditions, he said:

They are ashamed of people ascribing ignorance and lack of knowledge to them and they do not like the inability to respond to peoples' questions; thus people obtain knowledge from them (Ahlul Bayt) and because of this they incorporated personal judgment (*ra'y*) and deductive analogy (*qiyas*) in God's religion and put aside the works of holy Prophet; and through this turned to innovations in religious matter (*bid'ah*).<sup>25</sup>

In the abovementioned narration, the Imam stated the reason and cause of Sunni scholarship gravitating towards personal judgment and deductive analogy was their lack of narrations; this inclination in itself caused them to reject traditions.

Searching for a solution to solve their problem with the deficiency in hadiths through relying on personal judgment and deductive analogy was itself the reason why compliance to clear legal injunctions was replaced as the source of religious jurisprudence (*ahkam*) and religious rulings (*fatwa*); such a jurisprudence with the resources could not be an authentic jurisprudence and in accordance with the reports.

Imam Sadiq took an opposing stance towards this jurisprudential school of thought, and dedicated most of his cultural activities in battling with *ra'y* and *qiyas*, such that numerous narrations have been reported from the Imam in this matter, mentioned in the following:

<sup>25</sup> Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 40:

و يستحيون ان ينسبهم الناس الى الجهل و يكرهون ان يسألوا فلا يجيبون فيطلب الناس العلم من معدنه  
فذلك استعملوا الرأى و القياس فى دين الله و تركوا الاثار و دانوا بالبدع.

Abu Hanifah was amongst the individuals who preceded others in resorting to *ra'y* and *qiyas*; his jurisprudential school of thought was famous in Iraq for *ra'y* and this was because he did not consider the narrations reported by the Sunnis as authentic (*sahih*). Ibn Khaldun writes the following: "His [Abu Hanifah] entire selection of accepted narrations only reaches to seventeen or about the same range, as Malik has found and accepted three hundred narrations as authentic."<sup>26</sup>

Abu Bakr bin Dawud says, "The entire selection of narrations of Abu Hanifah is around one hundred and fifty traditions."<sup>27</sup>

Abu Hanifah's inclination towards *ra'y* and *qiyas* and abandoning clear legal injunctions was the result of two reasons:

1. He was willing to narrate and adhere to them as he considered the available traditions and reports as unauthentic.
2. From the time he turned to *ra'y* and *qiyas*, such sources made him needless of even *nusoos* (clear legal injunctions), such that he abandoned even the quantity that based on his opinion was authentic and reliable, and altogether turned over to *ra'y* and *qiyas*.

Iraq, considered the centre for the *ra'y* school of thought, was a Shi'a-populated country; clashes between the Shi'a and followers of *ra'y* was unavoidable, and it was along these lines that Imam Sadiq worked to repudiate the basis of *ra'y*, *qiyas*, and *istihsan* (juristic preference).

In popular narrations reported in relation to Imam Sadiq's debate with Abu Hanifah, the Imam advised him to avoid deductive analogy in

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<sup>26</sup> Introduction of Ibn Khaldun, p. 434, Beirut Edition

<sup>27</sup> Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 13, p. 416.

religion and reminds him in a few matters that qiyas can by no means be answer the problem. The Imam asks him, "Is adultery more important or the killing of a soul?" Abu Hanifah replied: "The killing of a soul." Imam Sadiq said, "God commanded four witnesses in adultery and two witnesses in murder for proof of allegation and this is contrary to condition of qiyas." Then he asked: "Is prayer more important or fasting?" He said prayer. The Imam said: "A woman is not obligated to fulfill the prayers not done during menstruation but still must complete the fasts not made and this cannot be rationalized with qiyas."<sup>28</sup>

Other similar examples have been mentioned in narrations as well.<sup>29</sup> Through this, the Imam showed how the use of qiyas can lead a jurist in deriving religious rulings and holding opinions that counter fixed and clear religious jurisprudence of Islam. Muwaffaq Makki reported this narration in the book of Abu Hanifah; it would seem the debate took place between Abu Hanifah and Imam Baqir, rather than Imam Sadiq, and moreover, it seems that Abu Hanifah brought the examples for Imam Baqir. In the face of the Imam's protests, he showed that he does not agree with *qiyas*.<sup>30</sup>

The Imam would discourage his followers from participating in gatherings with those who believed in personal judgment, since they risked falling under their influence.<sup>31</sup> Many narrations from the Imam displayed his condemnation of actions based on qiyas<sup>32</sup> and he did not

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<sup>28</sup> Hilliyyah al-Awliya', vol. 3, p. 197; Abu Zuhrah, al-Imam al-Sadiq, p. 296; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. 18, p. 30; al-Ihtijaj, p. 196, t Najaf, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 1, p. 471.

<sup>30</sup> Refer to, Abu Zuhrah, al-Imam Abu Hanifah, p. 69.

<sup>31</sup> al-Mahasin, p. 205, hadith 356; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 16.

<sup>32</sup> Wassail al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 23-29; Kafi, vol. 1, p. 58; 'Ilal al-Sharayi', vol. 1, p. 81-83; Rijal al-Kashi, p. 189 and 163-164.

hide his deep concern from those who narrated traditions from him while acting upon qiyas.

Dawud bin Sarhan says: "I heard the following from Imam Sadiq who said":

At times I report a tradition for someone and discourage him from arguing and disputing in Allah's religion and deductive analogy (*qiyas*); then when he leaves me, he interprets my words contrary to that which intended.<sup>33</sup>

Certainly if Imam Sadiq did not stand against qiyas and its followers and innovators with such determination, Shi'a jurisprudence, which did not have much distance with followers of ra'y in Iraq, would have been influenced by it and would have lost its authenticity. On the contrary, however, we see how Shi'a jurists widely followed the clear legal injunctions (*nusoos*) and placed it as their permanent method of deducting religious rulings; throughout time, based on these clear legal injunction, expressed secondary rulings (*ahkam far'i*) and presented a rich jurisprudential school of thought, based on strong principles and rules which was a process that Shaykh Tusi, in *al-Mabsut*, played a pivotal role in.

In regards to the problem with citation, Sunnis had many difficulties lying ahead of them. For this reason, Abu Hanifah did not trust them, since most methods of narration were not trustworthy and non-Shi'a jurisprudence was dependent upon a collection of false traditions where reliance upon was hard.

<sup>33</sup> Tusi, *Ikhtiyar Ma'rifah al-Rijal*, p. 239, 170-238:

أتى لاحدث الرجل بالحديث و انهاء عن الجدل و المرء في دين الله و انهاء عن التماس فيخرج من عندي فيتاؤل حديثي على غير تأويله.

However, the Shi'a were reliant upon infallibility (*'ismah*) and the gracious source of the Ahlul Bayt in which Amir al-Mu'minin stood at the head, and from this point holds no complications. Many Sunni scholars held no reservations or doubt in the truth of the matter. Abu Hanifah himself accepted a substantial portion of narrations reported from the Ahlul Bayt.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, one day he heard a tradition from Imam Sadiq, and then left his presence. He was asked: "Why didn't you ask Ja'far bin Muhammad about his link to the holy Prophet?" Abu Hanifah said, "I accept the tradition in this form."<sup>35</sup>

The source that the Shi'a relied on was acceptable by Sunnis since Imam Sadiq would narrate traditions through his forefathers, the origin of which would reach Imam Ali and then after to the Prophet himself. Imam Ali spent many years in the presence of the Prophet and was a trusted jurists and narrator for all jurists and narrators (*muhadith*).

During the time of the Banu Umayyads, works left by Imam Ali were forgotten through means other than Shi'ism and it was only his family who preserved his works. Generation after generation, they were able to pass it on to the Shi'a through their children.

Abu Zuhrah says the following, while pointing out the elimination of many of Imam Ali's sayings: "It is irrational that they curse Ali on the pulpit and yet allow his narrations to be used amongst the people as a rich source, full of Islamic knowledge...Thus, his works only remained amongst his family..."

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<sup>34</sup> Refer to al-Athar, when Ahmad bin Hanbal was asked about this chain of narration, from Musa bin Ja'far from Ja'far bin Muhammad from Muhammad bin Ali from Ali bin Husayn from Husayn bin Ali from Ali bin Abi Talib from the Prophet, he said: "If this chain of narration is read to an insane man he will become sane. Refer to *Manaqib ibn Shar Ashub*, vol. 2, p. 378.

<sup>35</sup> Amali, Shaykh Mufid, p. 21-22.

And because of this we conclude that the knowledge of the narrations from Imam Ali was preserved in its entirety in his family, such that his children have completely or almost completely reported the traditions that he narrated from the Prophet and also his religious rulings and jurisprudence.<sup>36</sup>

Imam Sadiq believed that the works of the Prophet were only completely in the hands of the Ahlul Bayt, because when others spoiled it, they held the complete and untouched works. The narrator says, "I told the Imam":

Oh son of the Prophet, did the Prophet deliver all which was necessary during his time? He said: 'Yes, He delivered all that which was necessary until the Day of Judgement.' I said: 'Has anything been lost from it?' He said: 'No, it has remained with the family of the Prophet.'<sup>37</sup>

### **Political pressures facing the Shi'a**

During Imam Sadiq's time, only during the third decade of the second century Hijri was it that a relative freedom existed; even during that decade the actions of the Imam and the Shi'a were monitored. However, before that through the Banu Umayyads and after that through Mansur, the Abbasid caliph, the harshest pressures were enforced on the Shi'a, such that the courage to voice any sort of self-expression was taken away from them. It has been reported in narrations:

<sup>36</sup> Abu Zuhrah, al-Imam al-Sadiq, p. 195.

<sup>37</sup> Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 23:

اصلحك الله اتى رسول الله (ص) الناس بما يكتفون في عهده؟ قال: نعم و ما يحتاجون اليه الى يوم القيامة. فقلت: فضاغ من ذلك شئى؟ فقال لا هو عند اهله

A companion of Abu Ja'far al-Thani (the tenth Imam) asked him: 'Because of the harsh suppression during their time, our scholars refrained from narrating traditions and sufficed to only writing them down. Now that there are books at our disposal, can we narrate traditions?' The Imam said: 'The traditions in those books are authentic and you may narrate from them',<sup>38</sup>

This narration portrays the political pressures on the Ahlul Bayt and their followers during the aforesaid era. The Shi'a scholars did not even have the opportunity to narrate traditions from the Imams. To protect themselves from Mansur's persecution, the Imam's companions were forced to do *taqiyyah* (a form of religious dissimulation) and be cautious of the smallest form of recklessness on their part. This restriction led to the abandonment of knowledge of the Ahlul Bayt and their religious rulings to a certain extent. Aban ibn Taghlib said to the Imam:

'I was sitting in the Mosque and people were asking about jurisprudential issues from me and would not leave me until I answered their questions. And if I expressed your viewpoints to them problems would arise. What should I do?' The Imam said, 'Tell the people that which you know from their viewpoints.'<sup>39</sup>

Imam Sadiq's continuous emphasis on *taqiyyah* was in and of itself proof of the political pressures. The danger of invasion on the Shi'a was

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<sup>38</sup> Kafi, vol. 1, p. 53; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 18, p. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 330.



so close that the Imam announced the abandonment of taqiyyah equivalent to the abandonment of prayer.<sup>40</sup>

Concerning this, the Imam told Mu'alla ibn Khunays (who was killed by the rulers of his time): "Oh Mu'alla, keep our affairs secret, and do not divulge it publicly, for whoever keeps it secret and does not reveal it, God will exalt him in this world."<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, narrations exist showing the extents of pressures were such that the Shi'a would even walk by each other without showing any regard for one another.<sup>42</sup> Regarding the agents of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, it has been said, "Mansur had spies in Madinah and would kill those people who would socialize with the followers of Ja'far."<sup>43</sup>

During this era, charging someone with being a Shi'a was enough to put an end to the security of their lives and wealth and would leave them confined and tortured.<sup>44</sup>

## Imam Sadiq and political issues

### A. Zayd's uprising

During Imam Sadiq's time, the major political events that took place was the Alawi movement (Zayd ibn Ali's uprising and Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Hasan and his brother's uprising in 145 and 146 AH) and the Abbasid movement, in which the Banu Umayyad dynasty collapsed

<sup>40</sup> Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. 12, p. 254 and 255; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 459 onward.

<sup>41</sup> Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-Darajat, p. 101; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 465:

يا معلى أكرم امرنا ولا تدعه فان من كرم امرنا ولا يذيعه اعزه الله في الدنيا.

<sup>42</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 378, Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. 12, p. 297-300; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 19, p. 32.

<sup>43</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 282 and refer to p. 283:

كان له بالمدينة جواسيس ينظرون على من اتفق شيعة جعفر فيضربون عنقه.

<sup>44</sup> al-Mahasin, p. 119; Hayat al-Imam al-Baqir (as), vol. 1, p. 256.

afterwards and the Banu Abbas took over. Another event was the division between the Abbasids and Alawis, originating prior to Aal Abbas's rise to power.

We cannot comprehensively describe the important political and religious events that formed since the beginning on the first century Hijri by the Alawis and Abbasids (Banu Hashim); however, we will try explain that portion of events that are somehow related to Imam Sadiq.

The admiration that the Alawis (especially the Fatimids) included lovers of the Ahlul Bayt that the Aal Abbas did not have. This situation had different reasons, where the most important of them were the Prophet's encounters. Furthermore, the issue of Imam Ali's Imamate, a crucial matter, at least for the Shi'a, increased this admiration. The Fatimids were the only remaining survivors left from the Prophet.

After the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, it was Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah that held a social-political status for a while. However, Imam Sajjad's academic and ethical figure slowly created a place for itself in society and became the distinguished figure of the Ahlul Bayt. He was the only son of Husayn ibn Ali that survived the tragic events of Karbala and with remaining alive he prevented the line of descendants of Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, from breaking through Imam Husayn.

Abdullah ibn Abbas was a notable academic figure throughout Islamic history who heard the Prophet's words first-hand and was considered one of the greatest narrators during his time. Until he was alive (68 AH) there were no differences between the Alawis and Bani Abbas, though afterwards the differences slowly began to form. In the beginning of the second century, the Abbasids decided to achieve independence from the

Alawis and privately attempted to encourage the public to follow them. However, they were unsuccessful, since the public believed the descendants of Ali as the only survivors of the Prophet's lineage. The virtuousness of the Ahlul Bayt, especially after the events of Karbala, deeply increased their societal dignity.

The movement that Zayd ibn Ali ibn Husayn started emphasized the importance of the Alawis amongst the people of Iraq. Zayd ibn Ali was Imam Baqir's brother and even with Imam Baqir's great importance in academic standing in the society, a significant opportunity and revolutionary movement was not made for Zayd; although he was amongst the narrators and because of being Alawi was recognized by the people of Iraq.

Imam Baqir passed away in 114 AH. After him, Imam Sadiq, the sixth Imam of Shi'a Islam, drew people to his attention. In the later portion of the second decade of the third century Hijri, Zayd decided to protest against the governor after a series of differences and verbal disputes with Hashim ibn Abdul Malik. In the month of Safar (122 AH) in Kufa, he initiated a revolutionary movement in which he was martyred after two days of military conflict.<sup>45</sup> What is important for us is Imam Sadiq's reaction regarding Zayd's uprising and the emergence of the Zaydiyyah sect that arose in Iraq after Zayd's martyrdom.

According to Shi'a narrations, Zayd believed in the Imamah of the Shi'a Imam, including Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq, such that it has been reported from him: "Ja'far is our Imam in *halal* (permissible) and *haram*

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<sup>45</sup> There are differences of opinion regarding the history of Zayd's martyrdom.

(forbidden).”<sup>46</sup> And in a narration, Imam Sadiq has said the following about Zayd: “May Allah bless him; He was a believing man and a knowledgeable man and righteous man, who if victorious would have remained faithful and if he attained governance, he knew who to give it to.”<sup>47</sup>

With the many traditions on this subject, one cannot mention Zayd ibn Ali without any connection to Imam Sadiq. At the same time, it is not unlikely that even though he had accepted Imam Sadiq’s leadership (*imamah*), he initiated this revolution without taking into consideration the Imam’s orders and without claiming leadership for himself. In this movement, he led an insurgence against Banu Umayyah, which was a symbol of ignorance for him, where for close to eighty years there were struggles between both families over the caliphate.

In some narrations from Imam Sadiq, the report of Zayd’s martyrdom in an area called Kanasah in Kufa was foretold.<sup>48</sup> And in another narration, Imam Sadiq gave his approval of some Shi‘as who sought to disassociate (*tabarri*) from Zayd.<sup>49</sup> Both parts of this narration have been reported in Sunni sources and even though they are authentic, they do not portray the Imam’s approval of the uprising, especially since certain criticisms have been made against Zayd’s uprising in al-Kafi and other Shi‘a collections of traditions.

<sup>46</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 361 and refer to p. 356; Rijal al-Najashi, p. 130; Kifayah al-Athar, p. 327 and refer to Kariman, *sirah* and *qiyam* Zayd ibn Ali, p. 49 onward.

جعفر امامنا في الحلال و الحرام

<sup>47</sup> Tusi, *ibid.*, p. 385:

رحمه الله اما ائمه كان مؤمنا وكان عالما وكان صدوقا اما ائمه لو ظفر لوفى اما ائمه لو ملك يعرف كيف يضعها.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha, vol. 1, chapter 25; Amali Saduq, Majlis 10, p. 40; Tanqih al-Maqal, vol. 1, p. 468; Sirah wa Qiyam Zayd ibn Ali, p. 468.

<sup>49</sup> Khitat al-Miqrizi, vol. 4, p. 307; Nameyeh Daneshwaran, vol. 5, p. 92; Fawat al-Wafayat, vol. 1, p. 210.

After Zayd's uprising and especially after the rise of the Bani Abbas, Bani al-Hasan, and Bani al-Husayn separated from each other, and using Zayd and his son Yahya as a pretence, they brought a member of Bani al-Hasan, named Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn Hasan ibn Ali, to power. Slowly they gathered a group of Shi'a in which the label of 'Zaydiyyah' was given to them. We will see later the strong differences and fiery arguments that took place between the Ja'faris and Zaydis which led the Zaydis in targeting accusations against Imam Sadiq; it has been reported in narrations that the Zaydis accused Imam Sadiq of not believing in *jihad* (holy war) for the sake of Allah. The Imam, however, denied these accusations and said: "However, I do not want to put aside my knowledge for their ignorance."<sup>50</sup>

***B. Imam Sadiq, Abu Salamah, and Abu Muslim's summon***

Imam Sadiq put much effort into training his companions, such that in jurisprudence and narration, they are considered to be the founders of the Ja'fari school of thought. The Imam's efforts against the existing governing rule and public claims of his right to the imamah and leadership of the Muslims were limited. He believed military aggression against the armed rulers without making preliminary preparations (especially cultural matters) would lead to failure. To perform this task, starting a Shi'a movement that believed in Imamah was necessary for victory against the rulers. Otherwise a simple and hasty uprising would not only endure but would allow others to take advantage of it.

Similar to how the Bani Abbas benefited from the movements led by Zayd, and after him, Yahya ibn Zayd in Khorasan, with the slogan, "To

<sup>50</sup> Furu' al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 332; Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 43; Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol. 2, p. 32:

ولكني اكره ان ادع علمي الى جملةم

please the family of Prophet Muhammad,” along with these efforts, they murdered a group of people who were advocates of Abu Hashim ibn Muhammad ibn Hanifah’s succession.

The outcomes of these acts later revealed for Ja’fari jurisprudence became the foundation of a strong Shi’a sect that would grow day by day. However, the Zaydiyyahs and Khawarij, who mainly worked in the political realm, did not last for long. They were culturally limited and slowly lost their relatively powerful stature and started to decline. The Bani Abbas finally found political and military triumph and held the reins of the vast Islamic empire. This was while Bani Hashim’s candidate was from the Bani Hasan, named Muhammad ibn Abdullah, where we will discuss his uprising later on. In this section, we will only discuss the portions that relates to Imam Sadiq and the Bani Abbas.

Bani Abbas’s chief act of inviting and summoning people was in the hands of two people: Amu Salamah al-Khallal, who was famous for being the vizier of Aal Muhammad (descendants of Muhammad)<sup>51</sup> and Abu Muslim Khorasani. The movement’s slogan was “To please the family of Prophet Muhammad” and with hearing this slogan, people would think of only one person from the Alawis. But the Alawis’ political weakness and the Bani Abbas’s ongoing struggle changed events to their advantage. Also, the ciphers were in the hands of Abu Salamah al-Khallal who had Saffah and Mansur ready in Kufa, and just when the Banu Umayyids fell, he got the peoples’ allegiance for Saffah. However, sometime later he was killed after being accused of advertising for the Alawis and working to replace the Abbasid with the Alawis. In

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<sup>51</sup> al-Wuzara wa al-Kuttub, p. 84; He and Abu Muslim were considered to be of the Mawali (non-Arab Muslims).

that situation, no opportunity was available for Imam Sadiq; and Nafs al-Zakiyyah (Muhammad ibn Abdullah), who held a favorable political position at the time, could not withstand the Abbasids. On this account, there was no opportunity for the Alawis to make any serious political efforts that were optimistic.

Imam Sadiq believed Abu Salamah's invitations had no basis, hence in response to a letter Abu Salamah wrote to the Imam, he said: "Abu Salamah is the *Shi'a* (follower) of another individual."<sup>52</sup> According to some reports, Abu Salamah wrote a letter in this regard to Imam Sadiq and in response the Imam wrote back: "You do not invite me and neither is this time, my time."<sup>53</sup>

In either case, the Imam's reaction towards this movement was caution and disagreement with the summoning, such that he advised Abdullah ibn Hasan regarding Nafs al-Zakiyyah to do the same. Abu Salamah's allegiance to Bani Abbas and their inability to completely disassociate with this matter showed they were not serious about their invitation. Even if one assumes he was committed to his invitation, the ability to follow through with such a task, with the presence of individuals like Abu Muslim and the Abbasids, was not achievable and accepting it would lead to nothing but destruction.

<sup>52</sup> Muruj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 269; al-Wuzara' wa al-Kuttab, p. 86.

<sup>53</sup> Refer to Hayat al-Imam al-Ridha, p. 49:

ما انت من رجالى و لا الزمان زمانى

