



THE BIRTH



Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) was born on the 1st of Rajab, 57 AH, in the city of Madinah. He was named **Muhammad** after the Holy Prophet (s). The name **means the praised one**. He was given the title of **al-Baqir**, which means one who discovered the inner mysteries of knowledge. It is also translated as one who split open knowledge to reveal its inner depths. His Kuniyyah was Abū Ja'far, meaning father of Ja'far al-Sādiq (a).




MOTHER FATHER PARENTS His father was Imam Sajjād (a) and his mother was Fatima, daughter of Imam Hasan (a).

The Imam lived for more than three years with his grandfather, Imam Husayn (a). As a child, he witnessed the tragedy of Karbala. From his father he learned the true essence of closeness to Allah *subhānahu wa-ta'āla* and serving His cause.

The 5th Imam is the only Imam whose lineage from both his father and mother leads to Prophet Muhammad (s).

Extension: Who are you named after? What's in a name?


What does your name mean? 

HIS PARENTS

Parent Information


Imam Muhammad al-Baqir came from very noble and honorable parents.

FATHER His father, Imam Sajjād, was the son of Imam Husayn. He was well known for his excellence in jurisprudence, knowledge, and piety. He worshipped Allah with such enthusiasm and efforts that he became known as Chief of those who prostrate often, and the Ornament of the worshippers.





Mother His mother was Fatima, the daughter of Imam Hasan, the chief of the youths of Heaven. She was among the Hashimite women and was a pure and chaste woman. She was given the kuniyyah of Umm 'Abdullah (the mother of 'Abdullah). Imam Sajjād, called her al-Siddiqā (the very truthful one). Concerning her Imam al-Sādiq said: "She was very truthful."

Quran Challenge: Read verse 23 of Sūratul Isrā (#17)


 How does the verse describe parents? What are our duties towards them?

Extension:

 What three qualities do you love in your mother and father? 

Write a letter or a poem to each of your parents telling them why you admire these qualities in them.

THE MADRASAH OF IMAM BĀQIR



During the time of Imam al-Baqir there was a shift of power from the Umayyads to the Abbaside. It was a time of political struggles and the rulers of the time were preoccupied with their conquests of foreign lands. They did not worry about the people in Madinah, their loyalties or their hostilities. The rulers also thought that the Imams of the Ahlul Bayt would not rebel against them. Thus they left Imam al-Baqir alone. Such freedom had not been seen in the time of the previous Imams.


Imam al-Baqir was a pioneer and deep thinker. He used the opportunity and established an educational institution to teach true Islam to the people in Madinah. He taught in the Mosque of the Prophet and sometimes in the yard of his own home. People came from far and wide to learn Quran tafsir, hadith, rules of Fiqh, and other Islamic sciences. Imam opened up the treasure house of knowledge and brought out gems that fascinated the people. Many great thinkers studied under him and went out to teach others. His school had thousands of students and continued after his death under Imam al-Sādiq.

As a spiritual leader, Imam directed the community towards progress in the way of God. The scientific life of the community in Madinah and many other communities prospered because of him.

The Imam looked after his students. He encouraged them to learn and teach others and look after their financial needs so they could dedicate themselves to religious knowledge. He asked his son Imam Sadiq to do the same.

Imam said to Abān bin Taghlab, one of his students:
"Sit down in the mosque. Give religious opinions to the people. Indeed I am glad to see among my followers the likes of you."

A STORY ON HARD WORK



Muhammad ibn Munkadir, an inhabitant of Madinah, narrates: I went out to one of the fields outside Madinah at a time when it was very hot. There I saw Muhammad ibn 'Alī (al-Baqir) working in the fields. He seemed to be working very hard.

I said to myself: Here is a respected leader of Quraysh out at this time and in these circumstances seeking worldly gains. I must warn him. So I approached him and greeted him. He returned my greeting. The sweat was pouring down from his face. It was obvious that he had been working hard.

 I am surprised to see you working so hard in this hot sun for worldly gains. If death were to come to you just now in what state would you meet your Lord?

Imam al-Baqir stood up to talk to him.

 I am working in obedience to Allah to provide for myself and my family. If death were to come to me now I would go to my Lord in a state of obedience. I would only be afraid if death came to be in a state of disobedience.

Imam Bāqir

 May God have mercy on you, I wanted to warn you and you have warned me.

Food for Thought:

- How is working hard an act of obedience to Allah? 
- What conditions must apply for it to be an act of obedience?