


HIS BIRTH



Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq (a) was born on the 17th Rabi'ul-awwal 83 A.H. in Madinah. His father was Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir (a) and his mother was Umm Farwah.

When Imam was born the family was delighted. His grandfather Imam Zaynul 'Ābidīn (a) took him in his arms and recited the Adhān and Iqāmah in his ears. He was given the name Ja'far. The name refers to a stream in Paradise.

Imam was brought up under the guidance of his grandfather, Imam Ali Zaynul 'Ābidīn for the first 12 years of his life. He learned many things from him, especially through his grandfather's worship and devotion to Allah.

Our 6th Imam is known as the founder of the Ja'farī school of thought. This is because the Imam got the opportunity to explain a vast number of hadith and teachings of the Ahlul Bayt (a).

Food For Thought:

Why are the Shi'ahs of Ali also called the Ja'farī?

Fact Finder:

Who does our 6th Imam share a birthday with? What title do they also have in common?

Extension:

What do you know about Imam Zaynul 'Ābidīn? List some things he would have taught his grandson.

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BRILLIANCE

Is the Earth flat or round? Travel to space and back to see if you got the right answer!

When Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq was a young boy he attended the university founded by his father. Instead of learning with kids his age he discussed serious matters like jurisprudence (fiqh) and the universe with much older students. Many distinguished scholars would ask Imam al-Sādiq when they had difficulty understanding his father's lectures.

One day, Imam al-Bāqir was teaching his students about Astronomy - the scientific study of stars, planets, comets and galaxies.

After talking about the stars, he said: "Now let's talk about Planet Earth: Do you think it is round or flat?"

The older students started thinking deeply. They thought and thought but could not figure out the answer!

11 year old Imam al-Sādiq entered the room and heard what they were talking about. He immediately pointed out:

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A LESSON FROM BAHĪLŪL

LESSON LEARNED

Abū Hanīfa was a student of Imam Sādiq and gave lectures in Kūfa. He often accepted the advice of the Imam. Once Abū Hanīfa remarked that if the Imam did not teach **three things** he would be able to accept him completely.

- 1 'Good is from God and evil is from the deeds of mankind' But I think that people have no choice, both good and evil are from God.
- 2 'In the final judgement the Shaytān will suffer in the fire' but I think that the fire will not burn Shaytān because he is made from fire.
- 3 'It is impossible to see God in this world or the next' but I think that anyone who has existence may be seen, if not in this world then in the next.

At this point Bahlūl who was one of Imam's companions but pretended to be a simple minded person, picked up a lump of earth and hit Abū Hanīfa on the head. Then he left quickly, saying that he had answered all three points made by Abū Hanīfa.

Abū Hanīfa complained about him to the caliph who called Bahlūl before him.

Caliph: Why did you throw the lump of earth at Abū Hanīfa?

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WISDOM FROM IMAM AL-SĀDIQ

It is a right on every Muslim who know us that he should present his practices of the day and night to himself and become an accountant of himself.

So if he sees a good deed he must increase it and if he sees a sin he must repent for it and ask forgiveness from Allah, lest he should be disgraced on the Day of judgment.

Imam al-Sādiq Tuhaf al-Uqūl, P 301

* Why is self-accounting so important that the 6th Imam says it is a right?

* Think of some ways of practising self-accounting regularly.

Mindfulness Self development
Gratitude Living to your life goals
Setting nearer to Allah

Extension:
Have you ever tried journaling, especially daily journaling? This can be a great way to take account of yourself and work towards your goals holistically - physical, mental, and spiritual. Turn a notebook into a self accounting journal.

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