

## THE BLESSED BIRTH



Imam Muhammad al -Taqi (a) was born on 10<sup>th</sup> Rajab 195 A.H. in Madina. His father was Imam Ali al-Ridha (a) and his mother was Bibi Sabika. She was from the family of Mariya Qibtiyya, one of the wives of Prophet Muhammad (s) and was well known among the Arabs for her purity and modesty.

Imam al-Ridha had asked his sister Bibi Hakimah to be present with Bibi Sabika when the Imam was born. Imam al-Ridha was filled with delight and joy at the birth of his blessed newborn son. He said, *'The like of Musa son of Imran, the splitter of the seas, and the like of Isa son of Maryam, blessed be the mother that bore him... has been born to me.'*



Imam al-Ridha shared the news of the birth with his companions. He said, *'Allah has granted me one who will inherit me and inherit the children of Dawud...'*. He told them the newborn child would be the Imam after him. Amongst his companions at that time was Di'bal, a poet of the time. Imam al-Ridha took his newborn son in his arms and recited the Adhan and Iqamah in his ears. He named the baby Muhammad.



The Imam grew up under the care and guardianship of his father till age five, during which Imam al-Ridha took him wherever he went and fed him with his own hands. After that, Imam al-Ridha was summoned to Marv.



### Challenge:

- 1) Who are two other Imams also born in the month of Rajab?
- 2) What are the names of the mothers of these Imams?



## FATHER - SON RELATIONSHIP



Imam al-Ridha loved his son Imam al-Jawad and took him everywhere he went. The two were inseparable and the love between them was evident. It is reported that the 8<sup>th</sup> Imam used to feed his son with his own hands.

When Imam al-Ridha was summoned to Marv by Ma'mun, he went to Makkah to perform 'Umrah and bid farewell to the Ka'bah. He took the young Imam who was 5 years old with him. After the tawaf, Muwaffaq, a helper of the Imam reported to him that his son, al-Jawad, seemed very sad and was refusing to leave the Ka'bah. Imam al-Ridha came to check on him. The young Imam said to his father with tears, *'How can I get up O father, while you have bid farewell to the House in such a way as if you shall never come back to it...?'*

Although Imam al-Jawad was young, he saw the fear and grief in his father's face and knew that he would never see him again. Imam al-Ridha's heart ached for his son and he consoled him. The Imam told al-Jawad to be strong and trust in Allah. He asked him to care for his affairs and tasks, especially those in Madina.

When Imam al-Ridha was in Khurasan, he sent letters to his son filled with wisdom, advice, and guidance. Historians state that Imam al-Ridha used to address his son with love and respect in his correspondences and call him 'Abu Ja'far'.

3

Which other father-son separation can you remember?

2

Find one verse of the Quran that refers to that separation

1

How is a parent-child relationship strengthened? What can weaken it?

## SIMPLICITY



Islam encourages simplicity and wants us to live a life that is free of waste. Our self-worth is connected to Allah and not in living up to expectations of other things and possessions do not increase our value.



Simplicity is to enjoy the lawful pleasures of life without extravagance. It is to fulfill the needs but not all the wants of the human being. Most importantly it means to be grateful with what Allah has given.

The Ahlul Bayt led simple lives and upheld themselves to very high standards. They were the leaders of the ummah, and their way of life made them approachable to the rich and the poor.

Imam al-Jawad refused to live in the palace in Baghdad offered to him by the Caliph and instead chose a humble small house to live in. Even when allowed to go back to Madina by Ma'mun, the Imam maintained his simple lifestyle. He had no bodyguards, no pomp, no restrictions on people meeting him, and no discrimination against anyone who wanted to talk to him.

### Quran Challenge:

Check Q7:31. What does this verse say about simplicity?



### Food For Thought:

Why does Islam discourage extravagance and pomp? What effect does it have on a person? On a society?



## THE FAMOUS DEBATE



Imam al-Jawad's debate with Yahya Ibn Aktham was among the important debates that took place in Baghdad. Elders, scholars and people of all classes attended the debate - the hall was full of people. It was a memorable day. Imam al-Jawad, who was nine years and some months then, took his seat in the front of the meeting as Ma'mun had ordered. Yahya sat before him and Ma'mun sat beside him.

Yahya asked permission to begin questioning the young Imam.

'...What is the penalty for one who hunts while in Ihram?'

- Did he hunt while in the Haram or the surrounding area?
- Was he fully aware of the matter or ignorant?
- Did he kill it intentionally or by mistake?
- Was the muhrim a free person or a slave?
- Was he a child or an adult?
- Was the game from birds or animals?
- Was it small or big?
- Did the muhrim insist on his doing or did he repent?
- Was it in the night or during the day?
- Was the muhrim in the 'Umra or Hajj?

The Imam asked Yahya to give different details of his question. Yahya was confused - he did not know these details even existed!

The Imam continued to answer the question in light of the different details. After hearing Imam's complete answer, Abbasid scholars admitted to the Imam's perfect knowledge. Loud calls of takbir and tahlil filled the hall. It was clear to all that the young Imam was indeed gifted with divine knowledge.