

Who was Imam Jafer Al-Sadiq (AS) ?

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By:

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Indeed, the writer should give a general idea about the person whom he writes about before he goes deeper into his writing so the reader does not misunderstand such a person when he reads each chapter of his life.

Here I would like to mention a group of the viewpoints of the religious scholars concerning Ja'far al- Sadiq, peace be on him, because such viewpoints express the ideas of generations about this great figure. They are as follows:

In (the book) Mizan Al- I'tidal (1:192), mentioning the Imam, al- Dhahabi(61) said: "Ja'far b. Mohammed b. 'Ali b. al- Husayn al- Hashmy Abu Abd Allah was of the great Imams. (He was) righteous, truthful, and of great importance."

In (the book) Tahdhib Al- Asma' wa Al- Lughat (1:149-150), al-Nawawy(62) said: "Mohammed b. Ishaq, Yahya al- Ansary, Malik, the two Sufyanis, b. Jarir, Shu'ba, Yahya al- Qattan, and the like reported from him. They agreed on his Imamate, his greatness, and his supremacy. 'Amru b. Abu al- Muqdam said: 'When I looked at Ja'far b. Mohammed, I knew that he was from the descendants of the Prophets."

Ibn Khulakan(63) said: "(He was) among the twelve Imams according to the doctrine of the Imamis. He was among the masters of the members of the House (ahl al Bayt). He was surnamed al- Sadiq because his speech was truthful. And his outstanding merit was more famous than to be mentioned." He added: "His pupil Abu Musa Jabir b. Hayyan al- Sufi al- Tartusi(64) wrote a book of one thousand sheets having the studies of al-Sadiq, which are five hundred studies". And added: "He was buried at al-Baqi' in the grave where his father Mohammed al- Baqir, his grandfather Zayn al- 'Abidin, and the uncle of his grandfather al-

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Hasan b. 'Ali, peace be on them. So, what a generous and honorable grave it is!

In (the Book) Nur al- Absar, p.131, al- Shibanji(65) said: "His outstanding traits were many. They are about to exceed the limit of the counter. And the understanding of the mindful writer is bewildered at their Kinds" He added: "There is an advantage in (the book) 'Hayat Al- Haywan Al- Kubra," in the Book 'Adab Al- Katib,' bin Qutayba said: "Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq b. Mohammed al- Baqir wrote the book of al- Jafr (divination). In it, there is all that they need of his knowledge till the Day of Judgment." Abu al- 'AIA' (a poet) pointed to this jafr (divination) and said:

*"Verily, they became astonished at the family of
Mohammed when their knowledge came to them
written on the skin of a full grown he- goat."
The mirror of the astrologer, though small (in size),
shows him in every populated and desolate (lands).*

In his book 'Is'af Al- Raghabin' printed in the footnote of the book 'Nur Al- Absar, p.208, Mohammed al- Sabban(66) said: "And as for Ja'far al-Sadiq, he was a noble Imam." He added: "His supplication was accepted. If he asked Allah for something, it was between his hands before he completed his words." [67]

In (the book) Lawaqih Al- Anwar, al- Sha'arany said: "If he (al-Sadiq), peace be on him, was in need of a thing, he would say: 'O Allah, I am in need of so and so.' That thing was put beside him before he completed his supplication."

In his book 'Tadhkirat Khawas Al- Umma, p.192, Sibb b. al- Jawzy [68] said: "The biographers said: 'He was busy worshipping (Allah) instead of seeking leadership.'"

He added: "Among his noble manners is what al- Zamakhshary, in his book 'Rabi' Al- Abrar', has reported from al- Shaqrany the servant of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, who said: 'Al- 'Atta' went out during the days of al- Mansur and I had no intercessor, so I stood at the door with bewilderment.

Suddenly, Ja'far b. Mohammed came towards me, so I told him about my need. He entered and came out. Suddenly, my need was in his hand. He gave it to me and said: 'The good (thing) from anyone is good and from you is better because of your place from us and the bad thing from anyone is bad and from you is worse because of your place from us. Indeed Ja'far said (these words) to al- Shaqrany because he (the latter) drank wine. So, among the outstanding traits of Ja'far is that he welcomed him and met his need though he (Ja'far) was aware of his behavior and preached with euphemism, and this is among the ethics of the Prophets".

In (the book) Matalib Al- Sa'ul, p.81, Mohammed b. Talha(69) said: "He (al- Sadiq) was among the great figures of ahl al Bayt and their progeny. He had many sciences, plentiful worshipping, and continuous parts of the Koran, clear asceticism, and much recitation (of the Koran).

He understood the meanings of the Holy Koran, took out jewels from its sea, and concluded its wonders. He divided his times according to the kinds of obedience, so he punished himself for

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them. His face reminded (the person) of the Hereafter, listening to his words put an end to one's desire for life. In this world, following his guidance inherits Paradise, the progeny of the prophethood, and the purity of his acts disclosed that he was among the progeny of the Prophet. And he said: 'As for his laudable deeds and qualities, they were about to exceed the number of the counter.

The understanding of the knowing (person) was perplexed at their kinds, as well as the rules whose causes are not understood and the sciences whose rules understanding is unable to encompass are added to him and reported from him, (that is) because of his many sciences that flew out of his heart due to the competition of piety."

In (the book) Al- Sawa'iq, ibin Hajar(70) said: "And men reported (a lot of) sciences, and his reputation spread all over the countries."

In Yanabi' Al- Mawada,(71) printed in Islambul, p.380,: "And among the Imams of ahl al Bayt was Abu Abd Allah Ja'far al- Sadiq." He added: "And he was among the progeny of ahl al Bat." And he added: "In (the Book) Tabaqat Al- Mashaykh Al- Sufiya, Shaykh Abu 'Abdurrahman al- Salimy said: 'Ja'far al- Sadiq overshadowed all his fellows from ahl al Bayt. He had abundant knowledge, great asceticism in the world, perfect piety in desires, and perfect good manners in wisdom."

In Hulyat Al- Awliya 3:192 the memorizer (of the Koran) Abu Na'im(72) said: "And among them was the articulate Imam and the first rein Abu Abd Allah Ja'far b. Mohammed al- Sadiq. He devoted himself to worshipping and obedience (to Allah), favored isolation and submission, and prevented (men) from leadership and parties." Then he reported his foregoing words on the authority of 'Amru b. Abu Al- Muqdam. And he reported from al- Hayaj b. Bastam,(73) who said: "And Ja'far b. Mohammed gave food and left nothing for his family."

In Al- Fusul Al- Muhima, Ibin al- Sabbagh al- Maliky(74) said: "Only he of his brothers was the caliph of his father and his trustee of authority and responsible for the Imamate after him. He excelled his group in favor. He was more famous than they and greater than they in importance. People reported from him the sciences which the passengers spread. So, he became famous all over the countries." At the end of his words, he said: "The deeds of Abu Abd Allah were laudable, his traits in honor were perfect, his dignity throughout the days was running, and the clubs of glory and honor were full of his glorious deeds."

In Saba'k Al- Dhahab, p.72, al- Siwidy(75) said: "Only he of his brothers was the caliph of his father and his trustee of authority, many sciences have been reported on his authority, and he was an Imam in tradition." And he said: "And his good traits were many."

In 'Umdat Al- Talib,(76) p.184,: "He was called 'Amud al- Sharaf (the pillar of honor), his good traits are successive among men, famous among the Shi'a and non- Shi'a, and al- Mansur al- Dawaniqy tried to kill him several times, but Allah saved him from that."

In 'Al- Millal wa Al- Nihal', al- Shahristany(77) said: "And he had abundant knowledge of religion and literature, perfection in wisdom, strong asceticism and perfect piety in desires. He lived in

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Medina for a period (of time) to avail the Shi'a who followed him and teach the supporters the secrets of sciences. Then he entered Iraq and lived there for a period (of time).

He never had words with the Imamate nor did he disputed with anyone for the caliphate. Whoever is drowning in the sea of knowledge does not wish for the river, and whoever goes up the peak of the truth is not afraid of him who comes down. And it is said that whoever feels Allah is in no need of men, and whoever associates with other than Allah, scruple plunders him."

In Mir'at Al- Jinan (1:304), concerning those who died in the year 148 (A.H.), al- Yafi'y(78) said: "In it (the year 148) died the great Sayyid Imam, the descendant of the Prophet and the jewel of generosity, Abu Abd Allah Ja'far al- Sadiq.

And he was buried at al- Baqi' in the grave where his father Mohammed al- Baqir, his grandfather Zayn al- Abidin, and the uncle of his grandfather al- Hasan b. 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with them all, (were buried). How generous that grave is! And how generous those noblemen with good traits are! He was surnamed al- Sadiq because of his truthfulness in his saying. He had valuable speech about the sciences of monotheism (Tawhid).

And his student Jabir b. Hayyan al- Sufy wrote a book of one thousand sheets on his studies, which are five hundred studies."

In his Amaly, Majlis no. 42, al- Saduq,(79) may his grave be fragrant, reported from Sulayman b. Dawud al- Manqary(80) on the authority of Hafs b. Ghayyath,(81) that if he told us about Ja'far b. Mohammed, peace be on him, he said: "The best of the Ja'faris has told me."

In Majlis no 32, al so he reported on the authority of Mohammed b. Zyad al- Azdy,(82) who said: "I have heard Malik b. Anas saying: 'I came to al-Sadiq Ja'far b. Mohammed, peace be on him, so he handed me pillow and respected me. He was not free from one of three traits- he was either fasting or praying or remembering (Allah). He was among the great worshippers and devotees who feared Allah, the Glorified and Almighty. His talks were many. His sitting was good. His advantages were many. If he said: "The Prophet of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, said sometimes he became green and sometimes became yellow. So, whoever knew him became ignorant of him. One year I went with him to perform the hajj.

When his camel arrived at the Haram, the voice ceased in his throat whenever he tried (to say) the talbiya [a rite during the hajj by saying labbayka (here am I O Allah)]. He was about to fall off his camel. So, I said to him: 'Son of the Prophet of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, you should say (labbayka Allahumma labbayka).' So, he said: 'Son of 'Amir, how dare I (the author) say labbayka Allahumma labbayk, and I am afraid that (Allah), the Glorified and Almighty, will say" Neither labbayk nor Sa'dayk."

In his book Al- Manaqib fi Ahwal Al- Sadiq, peace be on him, b. Shahrashub(83) reported on the authority of Malik b. Anas, who said: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no one has come into man's mind better than Ja'far al- Sadiq in the outstanding merit, knowledge, worship, and piety." And in his Amali, Majlis no. 81, al- Saduq increased his words: "By Allah, if he said he was truthful."

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Also he said: "In the Musnad of Abu Hanifa,(84) Abu al- Qasim al- Baghar has mentioned that al- Hasan b. Ziyad said: I have heard Abu Hanifa when he was asked: 'Who is the most knowledgeable (person) you have ever seen?' He said: 'Ja'far b. Mohammed.' When al- Mansur brought him, he sent for me and said: 'Abu Hanifa, indeed, men have been charmed by Ja'far b. Mohammed. So, prepare for him your most difficult questions. So, I prepared forty question for him. Then he sent for me Abu Ja'far, who was at Hira. So, I came to him and greeted him.

He led me to sitting and I sat down. Then he turned to said: 'Abu Abd Allah, this is Abu Hanifa.' He said: 'Yes, I know him.' Then he turned to me and said: 'Ask Abu Abd Allah some of your questions.' So, I began asking him. He answered me and said: 'You say so and so, the people of Medina say so and so, and we say so and so. We may agree with your or we may agree with them or we may disagree with you and them. I asked him all the forty questions. But he did not commit a breach of them. Then Abu Hanifa said: "Isn't the most knowledgeable of men most knowledgeable of them in the difference of men."

Al- Mansur, who was displeased with Abu Abd Allah (peace be on him), sometimes said the truth when he mentioned or met him: "This suffocation (of mortification) (i.e. al-Sadiq) in my throats is the most knowledgeable of men in his time."(85) "And he is among those who want the Hereafter, not the life in this world."(86) "Certainly, every house of prophethood has a traditionalist and, today, our traditionalist is Ja'far b. Mohammed." [87]

"Addressing al- Sadiq, peace be on him, al- Mansur said: "We are still dip out from your sea, we draw near to you, make (people) aware of blindness (ignorance), and you make the difficulties clear with your light (knowledge). So, we float on the clouds of your holiness and the flood of your sea,"(88) And he said to his chamberlain: "And these are among the sons of Fatima. No one ignores their right but the ignorant who have no luck in the Islamic Law."(89) Isma'il b. 'Ali b. Abd Allah b. al- 'Abbas said: "One day, I came to Abu Ja'far al- Mansur (and saw that) his beard had become wet because of the tears. He said to me: 'Haven't you known what has happened to your family?' So, I said: 'What has happened, O Amir al- Mu'minin?' He said:

'Indeed, their chief and scholar and the rest of the good ones of them passed away.' So, I said: 'Who is it?' He said: 'Ja'far b. Mohammed.'

So, I said: 'May Allah make the reward of Amir al- Mu'minin great and prolong his lasting for us.'

So, he said to me ., Surely, Ja'far was among those about whom Allah said: 'Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants.'(90) He was among those whom Allah chose. And he was among those who were the first to do good."(91) Moreover, the infidels, in spite of their infidelity and enmity towards Islam and Muslims, honored him and acknowledged his abundant knowledge and his holy spiritual qualities and talents. Those infidels were b. al- Muqaffa', b. Abu al- 'Auja', al- Daysany, and the like. (For example), b. al- Muqaffa' said: "Do you see this creation? And he made a sign with his own hand to the place of the tawaf (going around the Ka'ba as a ritual act of the hajj).

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No one of them is worthier of the name of humanity than that sitting Shaykh (i.e. al- Sadiq, peace be on him.). Ibin Abu al- 'Auja' said: "This is not a human being. Though he is spiritual in this world, he becomes incarnate if he wishes and becomes internally spiritual if he wishes. So, he is this, namely al- Sadiq, peace be on him."(91)

When b. Abu al- 'Auja' asked one of the Companions of al- Sadiq, peace be on him, then the companion brought him the answer after awhile and he (b. Abu al- 'Auja') approved it, he said: "This (the answer) has been brought from Hijaz."

Al- Daisany adopted the same manner for the Companions of al- Sadiq (peace be on him), who brought him his answer.

This is a drop of rain of what the righteous people reported concerning al- Sadiq, peace be on him, though they lived in different countries and times, and had different tastes and ideas. I (the author) have mentioned these ideas before discussing the detailed life of al- Sadiq to give you a general picture about this remarkable figure, because these words, though brief, tell the reader about the outstanding merits and sciences of al- Sadiq, peace be on him.