

Imam al-Jawad's (A.S.) Knowledge

Imam Muhammad ibn Ali al-Jawad (as) was only six years when his father was martyred and He (as) assumed the role of Imamate (Divine Leadership). Many Shia'hs were confused. Some thought that a six-year-old child could not become an Imam and the Imamate should be entrusted to an older man. 'Ali ibn Asbaat has narrated that:

[Once Abu Ja'ffar (reference to Imam al-Jawad) came to me, so I stared at him so as to be able to describe him to my people back at home when he (as) said, "O 'Ali ibn Asbaat! Know for certain that just as Allah (SWT) has kept proofs and evidences for Prophethood, the same is also true for the Imamate; and He (SWT) has said: 'And We gave him judgement while still a child'. (19:12) And He (SWT) has also said: 'When he came of age, We gave him judgement and (sacred) knowledge'. (12:22) Therefore, it is very much possible that some receive judgement in childhood and some after attaining forty years of age".] (Ithbaat al-Wasiyyah)

This projects the shining reality that childhood or adulthood have nothing to do with the position of Imamate, which is like the position of Prophethood in most of its specifications, for both – Imamate & Prophethood are in the hands of Allah (SWT), Who entrusts with them whomsoever He chooses from among His people.

Qasim ibn 'Abdul-Rahman belonged to the Zaydi School of Thought. He has narrated that:

[Once I was on my way to Baghdad when I saw many people rushing towards a place and gathering there. I asked, "What is happening here?" Somebody said, "The son of ar-Reza is here". I said to myself, "By Allah! I must see him" and saw that he (as) was riding a donkey. Having seen him, I said to myself, "May Allah curse the Shia'hs who claim that obedience to this man is obligatory".

As soon as this thought crossed my mind, the son of ar-Reza looked towards me and said, "O Qasim ibn 'Abdul-Rahman! 'And they (the people of Thamood) said: Are we to follow a lone human from ourselves?! Indeed then we would be in error and madness'. (54:24)".

When I heard this, I said to myself, "By Allah! This man is a magician". He (son of ar-Reza) once again looked up to me and said, "Has the Reminder been cast upon him from among us? Rather he is a self-conceited liar". (54:25)

I left the place saying, "I bear witness that this man is the proof of Allah upon His creatures" and accepted him as an Imam.] (Kashful-Ghummah)