

## **Imam Baqir (A.S.): "The Founder of the Cultural Revolution in Islam**

Imam Baqir (A.S.) has said, "Learn the knowledge from the knowledgeable and teach it to your brothers in faith, as the knowledgeable have taught you (1)".

Imam Baqir (A.S.) is known to be the founder of the Cultural Revolution in Shia. Although the spread of the Shia knowledge was mainly done by Imam Sadiq (A.S.) it was founded by Imam Baqir (A.S.).

During the life of Imam Baqir (A.S.) the kingdom of the Umayyads was declining and people hated them as well. Due to the ruling of a person such as Umar bin Abd al-Aziz, there was a severe disturbance amongst the Islamic nation, and there were a lot of uprisings and the governors were changing rapidly. For instance, during the Imamate of Imam Baqir (A.S.) 5 different caliphs governed within 19 years. Therefore, being free from the oppression of the Umayyads, Imam Baqir (A.S.) found a precious opportunity to establish the scientific revolution; the Shiite and Sunni scholars gathered around him and spread the teachings of Islam. This was the reason the nickname of Baqir was given to the Imam (A.S.) by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). According to Lisan al-Arab, a well known Arabic dictionary,

"Imam Baqir has got this nickname because he dissected the knowledge. He recognized the foundation of Islamic knowledge, understood its enlightenment, and spread it".

Imam Baqir (A.S.) was called Baqir because he established the spread and expansion of Islamic knowledge. In the Book of Irshad, Shaykh Mufid says that, "Those companions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) who were still alive, such as Jabir bin Abdullah al-Ansari, the prominent Tabi'in (2), the leaders of the Muslims from the scholars to the non-scholars such as Jabir Ju'fi, Kisan Sakhtiani, Amin Mubarak, Zahri, Ouza'ei, Abi Hanifah, Malik, Shafi'i, and Ziad bin Mundhir have narrated Hadiths from Imam Baqir (A.S.). Also, authors such as Tabari, Biladhuri, Salami, Khatib, Abi Dawood, Iskafi, Marwazi, Al-Isfahani, Basit, Naqash and others have narrated Hadiths from Imam Baqir (PBUH). These people were Sunni scholars, some of which found the opportunity to visit the Imam (A.S.)". Numerous Sunni scholars have confessed that Imam Baqir (A.S.) was the most knowledgeable person in his time. When interpreting the verse "Surely in this are signs for those who examine (3)", Hakam ibn Utaybah, one of the most eminent Sunni scholars, has stated that,

"I swear by Allah that Muhammad al-Baqir is one of the Mutasawwimin (those who examine; the smart and genius people)".

Moreover, Abdullah bin Ata, who is also a Sunni scholar, has said,

"I never saw scholars humiliate themselves in front of a person as they did for Imam Baqir (A.S.); Hakam ibn Utaybah was only a student of Imam Baqir (A.S.)".

The companions of Imam Baqir (A.S.) and those who have narrated Hadiths from him are more than several thousand people; however, there are extraordinary ones amongst them who should be called as the treasures of Shia, such as Muhammad ibn Muslim who has narrated thirty thousand Hadiths from Imam Baqir (A.S.).

The status of the Imams (A.S.) has been unappreciated throughout the history; nevertheless, Ibn Hajar, the fanatic Sunni scholar has stated in this regards, "He (Imam Baqir (A.S.) was the container, dissector, and spreader of knowledge. He was the sign of the knowledge and he elevated its status. His heart was purified and his knowledge and acts were chaste. He was pure and purifying; he was highly decent, and he spent his life in worshiping Allah. He was so knowledgeable in spirituality that its level cannot be described. He has so many statements in regards to spirituality and moving towards Allah that it is not possible to cover them all in this saying".

Selection taken from the works of Ayatullah al-Uzma Safi Gulpaigani

### **Footnotes:**

1. Usul Kafi, Vol. 1, p. 35
2. Tabi'in are those people who did not see Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) but were companions of his companions.
3. The holy Quran, 15:75