

The Lives and Maxims of the Prophets Quoted by Imam al-Baqir(A.S.)

Imam Abu Ja'far (al-Baqir), peace be on him, talked very much about the lives and maxims of the prophets. The specialists in these subjects have reported many traditions on his authority. The following are some of them:

1. Part of Allah's Revelation to Adam

The Ima`m, peace be on him, told his companions about the maxims and high moral standards Allah revealed to Adam. He, peace be on him said: "Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, revealed to Adam: 'I will gather all good for you in four words: one of them is for Me; one is for you; one is between Me and you; one is between you and people. As for the one that is for Me, it is that you should worship Me, and that you should not be a polytheist. As for the one that is for you, it is that I reward you for your act at the time when you are in need of the reward. As for the one that is between Me and you, is that you should pray to Me, and I shall answer you. As for the one that is between you and people, it is that you should satisfy people with what you satisfy yourself.

(Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 544)

2. Solomon's Maxim

Al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, told his companions about the wonderful maxim of Solomon, son of David. He, peace be on him, said: "Solomon, son of David, said: 'We have been given what has been given to people and what has not been given to them. We have been taught what has been taught to people and what has not been taught to them. However, we have found nothing better than fearing Allah during absence and presence, economizing during riches and poverty, the word of truth during pleasure and anger, and supplicating to Allah, the Great and Almighty in all circumstances.(Al-Khisal, p. 219)

This maxim has gathered good traits. For it summons people to fear Allah, to economize their daily bread. It prevents them from wasting their property. Moreover, it summons them to say the truth, to prefer it to all things, and to rely on Allah, the Most High, in whose hand is the fate of people.

3. A Maxim in the Torah

Al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, told his companions about a maxim in the Torah. He, peace be on him, said: "It has been written in the Torah: 'O Moses, I have created you, chosen you, strengthened you, commanded you to obey Me, and forbidden you from disobeying Me. If you obey Me, I will help you to obey Me. If you disobey, I will not help you to disobey Me. O Moses, My favor against you is that you should obey Me. My proof is against you when you disobey Me. (Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 274)

4. Why was Noah called the Grateful Servant?

Mohammed b. Moslem reported on the authority of Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, who said: "Noah was called the grateful servant because he said during morning and evening: 'O Allah, the blessing and health in religion and the world are from You. You are unique, there is no partner with You. I praise and thank You for them till You be pleased (with me).('Illa al-Sharai', p. 29)

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5. Noah's Prayer against his People Sudayr asked Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, about Noah's supplication against his people. He asked: "Do you know why Noah invoked Allah against his people when he said: 'My Lord, leave not upon the land any dweller from among the unbelievers. For sure if You leave them, they will lead astray Your servants, and will not beget any, but immoral, ungrateful (children)' Did he have knowledge of them?

The Ima`m, peace be on him, replied: "Allah revealed to him that no one of his people would believe (in Allah) except those who had believed (in Him) before. So, Noah recited this prayer against them.('Illa al-Sharai', p. 29)

6. Ismael was the first to speak Arabic

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, told his companions that Ismael, Allah's Prophet, was the first to speak Arabic. He, peace be on him, said: "Ismael was the first to

Speak Arabic. He was ten years old.%%%(Al-Bayan wa al-Tabiyyin, vol. 3, p. 290)

7. Allah whispered (words) to Moses

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, related to his companions that Allah, the Most High, whispered (words) to Moses. He, peace be on him, said: "It has been written in the Torah that Allah, the Great and Almighty, whispered (words) to Moses, son of Imran:

'O Moses, fear Me during your secret affairs, I will conceal your defects. Praise Me during your lonesomeness and your delightful pleasures, I will remind you during your heedlessness. Restrain your anger from those over whom I have made you king, I will restrain my anger from you. Conceal my hidden secrets in your heart. Humor with My enemy and your enemy from among My creatures. Do not make them curse Me when you manifest My hidden secrets. So, you make My enemy and your enemy take part in cursing Me.(Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 226)

8. Al-Ba`qir denied that the Prophet was illiterate

Ali b. Asba`t reported. He said: "I said to Abu` Ja`far: 'The people claim that the Prophet could neither read nor write.' So, he, peace be on him, denied that and said: 'How will that be? Allah, the Exalted, said: 'It is He (Allah) Who raised among the illiterates an Apostle from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error.' How did he teach them the Book and the Wisdom while he could neither read nor write?

Then 'Ali b. Asba`t asked the Ima`m: "Why was he called al-Nabi al-Ummi?

The Ima`m replied: "Because he was ascribed to Mecca. That is according to the words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: 'That you may warn Umm al-Qura` and those around her.' Umm al-Qura` means Mecca. So, he was called Ummi.(Ilal al-Sharai', p. 125)

9. Noah and Iblis

Ima`m Abu` Ja`far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, reported that a conversation took place between Allah's Prophet, Noah, peace be on him, and Iblis. That was when Noah invoked Allah against his people. The conversation is as follows:

Iblis: O Noah, you have done me a favor. Now, I want to reward you for it.

Noah: By Allah, I hate to do you a favor. What is it?

Iblis: Yes. You had invoked Allah against your people, so He had drowned them. Thus, no one has remained for me to delude him. I am at rest till Allah creates another generation. Then, I will delude them.

Noah: What is the reward?

Iblis: Mention me during three situations. For I am very close to the servant during them. Mention me when you become angry. Mention me when you judge between two persons. And mention me when you are with a woman and there is no one with you.(Al-Khisal, p. 128) Indeed, Iblis comes to man during these three situations. It is these situations that make man commit sins and disobey Allah. May Allah protect us from these evil situations.

10. The Death of Solomon

Ima`m Abu` Ja`far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, narrated to Abu` Basir the death of Allah's Prophet, Solomon. He, peace be on him, said: "Solomon, son of David, commanded the jinn (unseen creatures) to build a glass dome for him. He was leaning on his staff and watching the jinn's work. He happened to turn around.

Suddenly, he saw a man in the dome. He asked the man: "Who are you?" "It is who does not accept bribes nor fear the kings. I am the angel of death," replied the man. Then, the Angel of Death made Solomon die. Solomon was still leaning on his rod in the dome. The jinn went on working and looking at him.

Then Allah, the Great and Almighty, commanded the wood worm to eat Solomon's rod. 'When he fell down, the jinn came to know plainly that if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in abasing torment.('Ilal al-Sharai', p. 74)

11. Jacob's meeting with Joseph

Ima`m Abu` Ja`far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, reported a story about Jacob's meeting with Joseph. He, peace be on him, said: "Jacob said to his sons: 'On this day of yours, you and all your family should go to Joseph.' Jacob and Joseph's aunt, the mother of Yamin, were with them.

Then, they headed for Egypt with happiness. It took them nine days to get there. When they met Joseph in the King's house, Joseph embraced his father, kissed him, and wept. Then, he seated his father and his aunt on the king's throne. Then, he entered his room. He darkened

the eyelids with kohl, perfumed himself, wore the royal uniform, and went out. When they saw him, they bowed down for him. Then, they thanked Allah for that. Throughout those twenty years, Joseph did not darken the eyelids with kohl nor did he perfumed himself. He did that when Allah gathered him with his father and his brothers.

12. The Period of Jacob's Life in Egypt

Mohammed b. Moslem asked Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, about the period of Jacob's life in Egypt. So, the Ima`m, peace be on him, replied: "Jacob lived with Joseph in Egypt for two years." Then, Mohammed b. Moslem asked the Ima`m: "Who was the proof of Allah in the earth- Jacob or Joseph?"

The Ima`m, peace be on him, replied: "Jacob was the proof, and Joseph was the king. When Jacob died, Joseph put him in a coffin and carried him to the land of Sham. He buried him at Jerusalem. Then, Joseph became the proof after Jacob." Moreover, Mohammed asked the Ima`m: "Was Joseph an apostle and a prophet?" The Ima`m replied: "Yes. Do you not hear these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: 'Indeed, Joseph had brought you the clear proofs before.

This is some of what was reported on the authority of al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, concerning the conditions and lives of the prophets.