

Advancement of Sciences by Imam al-Baqir(A.S.)

The talents and genius of Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, resulted in great abilities of knowledge that included all sciences, such as the tradition, philosophy, theology, jurisprudence, high maxims, and standard morals. Moreover, it included the events the Ima`m had predicted before they occurred. Then they happened on the arena of life. His knowledge was vast. Though the scholars learned a lot of his pure knowledge, he found narrowness in himself because of his many sciences for which he found no way to proclaim. He, as the narrators said, heaved deep sighs and said with grief:

If I found (carriers) for my knowledge which Allah, the Great and Almighty, has given to me, I would proclaim monotheism, Islam, religion, and Islamic laws. How can I do that? My grandfather, the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him, found no carriers for his knowledge for his knowledge. Thus, he sighed deeply on the pulpit and said: 'Question me before you lose me, for there is much knowledge among the ribs.'[\(Safinat al-Bihar, vol. 2\)](#)

The historians and the narrators have unanimously agreed that the Ima`m was the richest of all the thinkers and the scholars of his time in scientific abilities and talents. Besides, the biographers have mentioned that he proclaimed knowledge and discovered its treasures and facts, as we have mentioned in the previous chapters. Before discussing the sciences which he discovered, it is necessary for us to present some important points concerning the topic.

(128)

The Scientific Life at his Time

The scientific movement at the time of the Ima`m was afflicted with much inactivity and dullness. In other words, it had no shade on the arena of life. That is because the political parties turned the people away from knowledge. The high houses pounced upon winning the government. So, they threw their human and financial powers into astonishing, horrible, violent battles that afflicted the community with heavy casualties and disasters. The members of the community launched armed attacks against each other. So, they turned away from knowledge and thought. In other words, they abandoned that light which Islam brought for mankind, and abandoned its orders to follow it to achieve their aims in life, such as security, welfare, and development.

The Bright Role of the Ima`m

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, came to a world full of discords, disturbances, and events. He saw that the Islamic community had lost all of its qualities. It lost all the characteristics which Allah wanted for it, such as unity, perfection, and development in the fields of knowledge and production. So, through his spiritual leadership, the Ima`m did his best to renew the glory of the community and to rebuild its cultural entity. Thus, he proclaimed knowledge and thought. He refrained from practicing all political activities, and devoted himself to knowledge only. The orientalist, Rowit M. Ronaldson, said: "He (al-Ba`qir) lived honored. He dedicated himself to knowledge during his isolation in Medina. The people came to him to ask him about the Ima`mate."[\(Aqidat al-Shi'a, p. 123\)](#)

Some notables of the community went to the Ima`m to study knowledge under him. Among them was the great scholar, Ja`bir b. Yazid al-Ju'fi. When the Ima`m met him for the first time, he asked him:

- Where are you from?
- From Ku`fa. (129)
- From which tribe?
- From Ju'f.
- What has brought you here?
- Seeking knowledge.
- From whom?
- From you.[\(Al-Manaqib, vol. 3, p. 331\).](#)

Then knowledge-loving deputations came to the Ima`m frequently to learn knowledge and sciences from him. Shaykh Abu` Zahra said: "All the scholars who went to (Medina), the city of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, went to him to learn the principal features of religion from him."[\(*Al-Imam Zayd, p. 22\)](#)

The jurists learned from him the lawful and the unlawful.[\('Uyyun al-Akhbar wa Funun al-Athar, p. 213\)](#)

However, the Islamic world took from the Ima`m all the elements of its development and progress. The cultural movement that depended on the Ima`m was not confined to his time

only. Rather it included all the times that followed him. Thus, the scientific life appeared, and sciences developed very much. For this reason, the scientific life in Islam prospered. Surely, the cultural life in Islam is indebted to this great Ima`m, for he renewed and led it throughout history.