

The Sublime Preachings of Imam al-Baqir(A.S.)

Ima`m Abu` Ja`far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, preached to his companions as the prophets preached to their communities. He warned them from the deception and delusions of the world. He enlightened them on the attack of time and the disasters of days. He summoned them to think deeply about what they would come to when they would leave the world for the dark graves and the lonely narrow spaces within the graves, where nothing would avail them except their good deeds. The following are some of his preaching: 1. He, peace be on him, said: "O People, you are targets in this world. Deaths compete with each other for you. No one of you receives a new day of his lifetime but through ending another day of his appointed time. Which meal has no lump (in the throat)? Which drink has no lump (in the throat)? Set right what you will go to with what you will depart from. As for today, it is booty. As for tomorrow, you do not know to whom it belongs. The people of the world are traveling. They will untie their baggage in (a place) other than it. Origins have left us. We are their branches. So, what is the survival of the branch after its origin?

Where are those whose lifetimes were longer than yours, and whose desires were farther than yours? O Son of Adam, what you cannot repel, has come to you. What does not come back, has left you. So, do not number the livelihood that goes away as livelihood. You have nothing of it except the pleasure that approaches you to your death and brings you nearer to your appointed time. So, you look like the missing lover and torn blackness. So, take care of your own soul. Leave other than it. Ask Allah for help, and He will help you. ([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p.299](#))

2. Some of his Shi'ites came to him. He preached to them and warned them from the punishment of Allah. However, they paid no attention to his preaching. That displeased him. So, he bowed his head for a while, and then he raised it. He admonished them and preached to them again, saying:

Surely, if part of this speech of mine came into the heart of one of you, he would be dead. Indeed you are ghosts without souls and flies without a lamp. You look like big pieces of wood clad with garments, and mutinous idols. Do you not take gold from stone? Do you not take light from the brightest light?

Do you not take pearls from the sea? Take the good word from him who says it even if he does not put it into effect. That is because Allah says: 'Those who listen to the word, then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided. ([The Holy Qur'an, al-Zumar, 18](#))

O Conceited one, woe unto you! Would you not praise Him Whom you gives something perishable and He gives you something remaining? (Give) one perishable dirham for ten dirhams to a hundred fold from the All-Generous (Allah). Allah has given you a reward from Him. It is He Who feeds you, waters you, clothes you, heals you, suffices you, and protects you from those who frighten you. Who protects you by day and night, fulfills your urgent need, and tests you according to reason?

It seems that you have forgotten the nights of your aches and fear. You asked Him, and He responded to you. So, He is worthy of gratefulness for His favor. However, you have forgotten Him concerning him whom He has mentioned. Woe unto you! You are a thief from among the thieves of sins. You hasten to desires and commit sins. You do that through your ignorance. It seems that your not under the oversight of Allah. Or it seems that Allah does not watch you.

O Seeker of the garden, how long your sleep is! How weak your walking is! How weak your intention is! By Allah, you are invoked and wanted. O You who escape from the Fire, how quick your walking to it! How fast you are in earning that which will throw you into it!

"Look at those lines of graves by the yards of the houses. They (the dead) are near in their lines and their graves. However, they are far in their meeting. They lived long, and then they were ruined. They associated (with people), and then they were forced to dwell deserted places. They were tranquil, and then they were disturbed. They were hopeless, and then they passed away. Therefore, no one is near and far, far and near, living and ruined, sociable and lonely, tranquil and disturbed, inhabitant and departed, except the people of the graves.

O Son of the three days, (I mean) your day when you were born. Your day when you will come down into your grave. And your day when you will come out (of your grave to meet) your Lord. How important this day will be! O Possessors of the admirable appearance and of thirst- quenching and kneeling camels, why do I see your bodies sound and your hearts ruined? By Allah, if you saw what you would meet and what you would come to, you would say: 'Would that we were sent back, and we would not reject the communications of our Lord and we would be of the believers. ([The Holy Qur'an, al-An-'am, 27](#))

Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: 'And if they were sent back, they would certainly go

back to that which they are forbidden, and most surely they are liars.(The Holy Qur'an, al-An-'am, 28)

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, blamed these people when they turned away from his preaching and directions. He wanted to set right their behavior. He wanted them to follow righteousness to gain good here and in the hereafter. He gave them these effective preaching to make them obey Allah. For Allah is able to do good for them and to deprive them of that.

He preached to them with these lessons to which souls submit, and of which hearts are afraid.

3. Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, preached to one of his companions. He informed him of the reality of this life. He, peace be on him, said to him: "Regard the world as a house where you live, and then you leave the house. Or regard (it) as perfection you obtain in your sleep. When you wake, you find nothing of it.([Mirr'at al-Jinan, vol. 1, p. 149](#))

Indeed if man thinks about the world through this correct opinion, he will be free from conceit, selfishness, greediness, and other psychological diseases that deviate him from the right path.

4. Among his preaching is this: "If the eye is bathed in tears, Allah will protect its owner from the Fire. If the tear flows down the cheek, neither miserliness nor abasement will befall its owner. There is a punishment for everything except the tear. For Allah, the Most High, forgives the seas of sins through it.([Akhbar al-Duwak, p. 11](#))

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, summoned Moslems to weep out of fear of Allah. Weeping is among the signs of faith. It shows the relationship between the servant and his Lord and Creator.

5. Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, said: "Man should mention death very much. If he mentions death very much, he will refrain from the world.(. [Jami'al-Sa'dat, vol. 2, p. 61](#))

Surely, if man mentions death, he will renounce the world and refrains from its vanities and pleasures.

6. Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, was asked about the most ascetic of all the people. So, he, peace be on him, replied: "It is he who pays no attention to the world."Then he was asked: "Who is the most hopeless of all the people?" "It is he who sells the remaining (life) for the transitory (life),"he replied. Then he was asked: "Who is the most important of all the people?" "It is he who thinks that the world is not important,"he answered.

([Al-Bayan wa al-Tabiyyin, vol. 3, p. 161](#))

7. He, peace be on him, preached to his companions, saying: "Allah, the Exalted, says: 'O Son of Adam, I have done you three favors: I have concealed what your family does not know. For, if they knew it, they would not take care of you. I have given to you generously. Now, I ask you for a loan, but you have offered no good. I have had mercy on you in the third one, but you have offered no good.([Al-Khisal, p. 131](#))

These are some examples of the Ima`m's valuable preaching. He, peace be on him, reported them to cure and educate souls. This educational phenomenon is among the most prominent values in the teachings of the Ima`ms of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them.

The Virtue of Reason

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, talked about the virtue of reason. He denoted that it was the greatest of all things which Allah, the Exalted, created. He, peace be on him, said:

When Allah created reason, He tested it. Then He ordered it to come forward and it came forward. Then He ordered it to go back and it went back. Then Allah said: 'I swear by My power and majesty that no creation of Mine is dearer to Me than you are, and I have made you perfect in those whom I love. Lo! To you are My orders and prohibitions. And for you are My rewards and retributions reserved.

Surely, through reason, the value of man becomes high. Were it not for reason, there would be no difference between man and the animal. Reason is among the fundamental conditions necessary for performing the religious duties, as the jurists say.

Cleverness

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, praised cleverness. He regarded it as the only source of man's happiness and righteousness. He, peace be on him, said:

"The goodness of all coexistence and living together is a full measure. Two thirds of the measure are cleverness. And one third of it is heedlessness.

Nothing has a portion of good and righteousness except cleverness. That is because man feigns inattention to the things which he realizes and knows.

([Al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, vol. 1, p. 76](#))

How wonderful this maxim is! A religious scholar commented on it, saying: "Indeed, it has

gathered together all the righteousness of the affairs of the world.

Contemplation

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, summoned Moslems to think things over. He, peace be on him, said: "Through thinking (things) over, the fruitful opinion is concluded.([Jami'al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, p. 165](#))

This word is among the wonderful maxims. Man can come to a correct genuine opinion through considering things carefully. He can conclude scientific facts and inventions through contemplating things. It is impossible for him to come to that without contemplation.

Noble Manners

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, took care of spreading high moral standards among people. For they are necessary for building a Moslem society. Tradition books are full of his wise words. The following are some of them:

1. Kindness

As for kindness to people, it plays an important role in strengthening social ties and spreading love and friendship among people. Islam has urged Moslems to cling to kindness to people. Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, said: "Continuous kindness is the best means with me.([Tuhaf al-Uqul, pp. 296](#))

The most lovable things with the Ima`m, peace be on him, was continuing kindness to people, for he wanted to plant love and affection in their hearts through it.

2. Fairness

In many of his traditions, Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, urged Moslems to treat people with fairness. Among what he said is the following:

A. He, peace be on him, said: "Indeed, Allah singles out people from among His creatures for fairness. He makes them love fairness. He makes them love fair acts. Then He orders the seekers of fairness to go to them. Then He makes it easy for them to do fairness, as He makes it easy for rain (to come down) to the arid land to enliven it and its people. Allah singles out people from among His creatures to be enemies of fairness. He makes them hate fairness. And He

them hate fair acts. He prevents the seekers of fairness from going to them, as He prevents rain from (coming down) to the arid land to ruin it and its people. And what Allah forgives is more (than this).([Tuhaf al-Uqul, pp. 295](#))

B. He, peace be on him, said: "Fair acts prevent evil deaths (from happening). Every fair act is alms. The people of fairness here are the people of fairness in the hereafter. The people of the abominable acts here are the people of the abominable acts in the hereafter. The people of the fair acts will be the first to enter the garden. The people of the abominable acts will be the first to enter the Fire.([Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 225](#))

3. Kindness should be Equivalent to Fairness

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, ordered his companions to repay fairness with much more kindness. He, peace be on him, said: "Whoever does a favor like that which is done for him returns like for like. Whoever doubles the favor is grateful. Whoever thanks (people for their favors) is generous. He who knows that what he does is for his own interest should not find people slow in their gratefulness (for him), nor should he ask them for more love (for him). So, do not ask other than you to thank you for what you do for your own interest, and through which you protect your honor. Know that the one who asks you for a need does not honor himself when he asks you (for a need). So, honor yourself through fulfilling his need.([Tuhaf al-Uqul, pp. 300](#))

When the Ima`m, peace be on him, had ordered his companions to return like for like, he summoned them to do kindness for kindness. He ordered them not to ask people for a reward. For they did that for their own interests and honor.

Rules of Conduct

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, urged his companions to treat people according to the rules of social conduct.

Among these rules are the following:

1. Cheerfulness

He, peace be on him, asked his companions to meet people with cheerfulness and good

words. He, peace be on him, said: "Good words and cheerfulness lead to love and nearness to Allah. Bad words and frowning lead to hate and remoteness from Allah.([Tuhaf al-Uqul, pp. 296](#))

2. Treating people kindly

He, peace be on him, urged his companions to treat people kindly. He, peace be on him, said: "Say to people the best (words) which you want them to say to you. For Allah hates the one who curses and abuses and defames the believers. He detests the one who uses an obscene language and insists on begging. He loves the one who is modest, clement, chaste. ([Tuhaf al-Uqul, pp. 300](#))

Muslim's Rights

He, peace be on him, denoted the rights which Islam legislated for the Moslem towards his Moslem brother. He, peace be on him, said: "Love your Moslem brother. Love for him what you love for yourself. Hate for him what you hate for yourself. When you are in need of (a certain thing), then ask him for that. When he asks you for (a certain need), then give (it) to him. If you spare no good for him, he will spare no good for you. If you help him, he will help you. If he is absent, then keep him during his absence. If he is present, then visit him, and respect him. For he is from you, and you are from him. If he admonishes you, then do not leave him till his hate comes to an end. If good befalls him, then thank Allah for that. If a tribulation afflicts him, then help him([Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 288](#))

If Moslems put into effect these excellent teachings, they will be the strongest of all the peoples of the world, and nations will not invade them, enslave them, and plunder their wealth. However, they have deviated from these true teachings, so they have become weak humble parties. "Each party is happy with that which it has.

Fulfilling the Moslem's Need

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, summoned the Moslems to fulfill the needs of their Moslem brothers. He warned them from leaving them. He, peace be on him, said: "If the servant refrains from helping his Moslem brother and does not strive to fulfill his need, he will be afflicted by the need causing a sin not a reward. If the servants refrains from spending on that which pleases Allah, then he will be afflicted by spending a hundred fold on that which displeases Allah.([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 292](#))

Relations with Womb Relatives

Islam takes care of the relations with womb relatives. It summons Moslems to cling to them, for they strengthen the family and lead the community to fruitful results. Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, urged the Moslems to cleave to them. He, peace be on him, said: "Relations with blood relatives increase acts, develop properties, repel the tribulation, make easy the reckoning, and postpone the a fixed term (of death).([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 298](#))

Alms

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, underlined alms. He mentioned the advantages which the one who gives alms obtains. He mentioned that before his companions. He, peace be on him, said: "Shall I tell you about the thing that drives away the ruler and the Satan from you? Yes, tell us to do it,"replied Abu` Hamza.

He, peace be on him, said: "Give alms early in the morning. For it blackens the Satan's face and breaks the greediness of the oppressive ruler on that days of yours. Love each other for Allah. Help each other with the good deeds. For such deeds put end to the Satan and the oppressive ruler. Insist on asking Allah for forgiveness, for such insistence erases sins. ([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 298](#))

Pity for the Orphan

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, urged the Moslems to feel pity for the orphan and to have affection for the weak. He, peace be on him, said: "Whoever has four (qualities), Allah will build a house for him in the garden. The one who shelters the orphan, has mercy on the weak, feel compassion for his parents, and treats his slave gently.

Good Qualities

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, talked about the good qualities that draw the servant nearer to Allah and make him far from His wrath and punishment. He, peace be on him, said: "Whoever has four (qualities), his Islam is perfect, is helped with his faith, his sins are erased, and meets Allah, the Great and Almighty, while He is pleased with him. If he has sins from his head to his feet, Allah forgives him his sins.

They are: Loyalty to Allah, the truthfulness of the tongue with the people, shame of the ugly (things) with Allah and people, and good manners towards the family and people. The believer who has four (qualities), Allah, the Exalted, will make him live in the rooms on the rooms in the most high gardens. It is he who shelters the orphan, has mercy on him, and is like the father for him. It is he who has mercy on the weak, helps them, and suffices them. It is he who spends on his parents, treats them gently, and pleases them. And it is he who helps and suffices his slave.([Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 191](#))

The Ima`m, peace be on him, ordered man to do all things that drew him nearer to his Lord. He guided him to the good deeds which Allah loved, for which He rewarded him very much, and for which He did him many favors. (283)

Silence

The Ima`m, peace be on him, summoned the Moslems to cling to silence. He ordered them to refrain from saying useless words. He, peace be on him, said: "Indeed, this tongue is the key of all good and evil. So, the believer must seal his tongue as he seals his gold and silver. For Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'May Allah have mercy of the believer who restrains his tongue from all evil. For that is alms from him for himself. No one is safe from sins unless he restrains his tongue.'[\(Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 298\)](#)

Bad Qualities and Deeds

The Ima`m, peace be on him, warned the Moslems from having bad qualities and abominable deeds. The following are some of the traditions reported on his authority:

1. He, peace be on him, said: "If some haughtiness enters the person's heart, some of his reason decreases.[\(Safwat al-Safwa, vol. 2, p. 61\)](#)

He, peace be on him, said: "The haughty one quarrels with Allah about His gown.³

Indeed, haughtiness results from ignorance and the decrease of reason. If man knows that he will be a mass of mean earth after death, he shows no haughtiness towards Allah's creatures.

2. The Ima`m, peace be on him, dispraised the hypocrite person, who is double-faced and double-tongued. He, peace be on him, said: "Bad is the servant who is double-faced and double-tongued. He flatters his brother when he is present. He backbites him when he is absent. He envies him brother when he is given. He betrays him when he is afflicted by a tribulation.

[\(Al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 30\)](#)

These qualities denotes that such a person has an evil soul, that he has no morals, and that he has no faith in his Lord.

3. The Ima`m, peace be on him, warned the Moslems from having the following qualities. He, peace be on him, said: "Bad is captivity after victory, depression after the misfortune, rudeness with the poor, cruelty with the neighbor, miserliness towards the relative, disagreement with the friend, misbehavior towards the family, impudence through the power, greediness during poverty, backbiting the friend, telling lies, the slander, perfidy from the ruler, the rage from the generous. Whoever asks more than his right is worth of deprivation. Setting right the one who does not know dignity is through disgracing him. The careful one rises (in rank). The cautious one finds (good).

[\(Ibn Hamdun, Tadhkirat, p. 60\)](#)

Whoever refrains from these qualities is endowed with high moral standards and is among the unique people.

4. The Ima`m, peace be on him, prevented the Moslems from practicing the following qualities. He, peace be on him, said: "The owner of three traits will not die till he sees their evil results: oppression, cutting off ties of relations, and binding oath through which he fights with Allah. Indeed the quickest obedience in reward is the relations with womb relatives. Perhaps some people are sinners. However, they visit each other. So, their properties increase and they become rich. Binding oath and cutting off ties of relations leave houses empty of their people.[\(Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 294\)](#)

5. The Ima`m, peace be on him, hated the people who were endowed with the following traits. He, peace be on him, said: "Four (traits) lead to the quickest punishment: The person whom you treat with kindness but he mistreats you. The person who you do not oppress but oppresses you. The person to whom you are loyal but he betrays you. The person who visits his relations but they end their relationship with him.[\(Al-Khisal, p. 210\)](#)

6. The Ima`m, peace be on him, prevented the Moslems from drinking wine. For it is among the mortal sins. He, peace be on him, said: "Indeed the one who is alcoholic is like the one who worships the idol. Wine makes him shake, and destroys his manhood. It makes him violate the prohibitions such as shedding blood and committing fornication.[\(Al-Bihar, vol. 16, p. 771\)](#)

Surely, wine is the source of all sins and offenses. It is among the social catastrophes that defame man and leads him to commit all the prohibitions. As for its bodily damages, we have talked about them in one of our books.

7. The Ima`m, peace be on him, dispraised the person who used obscene language. He, peace be on him, said: "Surely, Allah detests the one who uses obscene language.([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 296](#))

Backbiting and Slander

The Ima`m, peace be on him, made a distinction between backbiting and slander. He, peace be on him, said: "It is an act of backbiting to say concerning your brother what Allah conceals for him. As for the manifest traits of him such as fury and hastiness, there is no harm in mentioning them. As for slander, it is that you say concerning your brother what he has not.

([Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 298](#))

Anger and its Remedy

The Ima`m, peace be on him, warned the Moslems from anger. He provided a remedy for it. He, peace be on him, said : "Indeed this anger is an ember from Satan. The ember is burnt in the heart of the son of Adam (i. e. , man). When one of you becomes angry, his eyes become red and his jugular veins become swollen. Thus, Satan enters him. When he becomes angry, he must sit on the ground. With that he removes the cunning of Satan.([Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, p. 289](#)).

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, underlined the affair of anger. He warned the Moslems of its final results. Ima`m al- Sa`diq, peace be on him, said: "My father said: 'There is nothing more intense than anger. Perhaps the person becomes angry. So, he kills the soul which Allah has forbidden and defames the chaste woman.([Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, p. 289](#))

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far, peace be on him, said: "The person sometimes becomes angry and continues his anger till he enters the Fire.([Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, p. 289](#))

Vanity

The Ima`m, peace be on him, said: "I wonder at the one who is vain and boastful. He was created from a sperm. Then he becomes carrion. Between this and that, he does not know what will be done for him.