

IMAM AL-BAQIR ^[A.S]

امام الباقر (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Become acquainted with Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir's biography and titles
- Understand how Imam Bāqir dealt with academic problems at his time
- Understand the importance of knowledge, teachers and scholars

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-Bāqir (as)

Name: Muḥammad al-Baqir

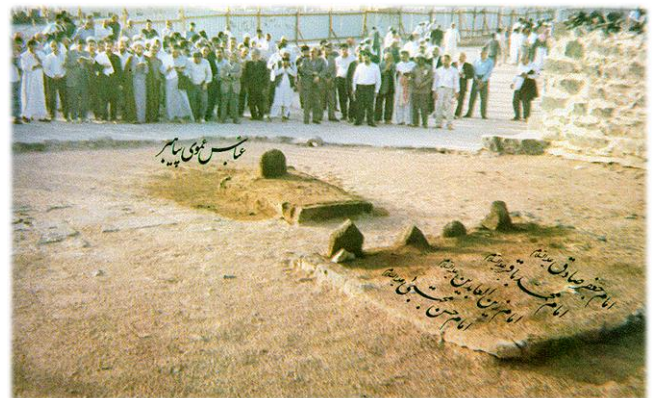
When referring to the Imam's (as) name, al-Bāqir means the "Unveiler" of knowledge"

Father: Imam Zainul Abidin (as)

Mother: Fatima bint Ḥasan (she was the daughter of Imam Ḥasan)



Birthplace: Medina



Place of Burial: Medina, Jannatul Baqī'

Duration of Imamate: 19 years

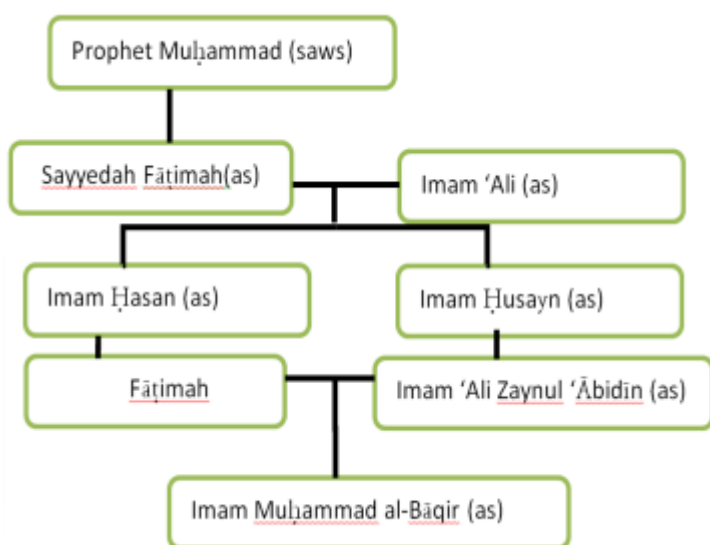
Cause of Martyrdom: Poisoned

HIS TITLES

Al-Bāqir: means to have extremely sharp knowledge that could easily penetrate into hidden knowledge. This means that Allah (SWT) had gifted Imam Bāqir all the knowledge about the physical and spiritual world. This title was given to him by the Holy Prophet long before Imam Bāqir was born. The Prophet told his companion Jāber ibn ‘Abdullah al-Ansārī:

“You will live long enough to see a descendant of mine whose title will be al-Bāqir. When you see him give him my greetings.”

Ibnul Khīratayn: means the son of the two good people – because Imam Bāqir is the only Imam whose parents were both from the descendants of the Prophet:



WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE IMAM MUḤAMMAD AL-BĀQIR’S TIME?

- The people who took the position of leadership and government after the Prophet were harsh towards Ahlul Bayt and did not let them freely preach the true teachings of the Prophet.
- During this time, many narrations and teachings that the Prophet left behind were changed and manipulated.
- This restriction against Ahlul Bayt continued for about 90 years after the Prophet passed away.

AT THE TIME OF IMAM AL-BĀQIR

The government was weaker because they were fighting amongst themselves for power, so they could not pay as much attention to Ahlul Bayt and their teachings.

However by that time, many people had wrong information about Islam.

Also, other people were making up narrations (what the Prophet said) so they could sell them and make money.

As you can tell this caused the spread of wrong information about Islam.

HOW DID IMAM AL-BĀQIR DEAL WITH IT?

People wanted to know the truth about the teachings of Islam. The only person they could find who could answer all their questions was Imam Bāqir. That is because he was al-Bāqir i.e. the one who knew all knowledge including the hidden knowledge that other people do not have access to.

He answered all their questions with reasoning and proof from the Holy Qur’ān.

Some people who did not like Ahlul Bayt tried to argue with the Imam but the Imam would always prove them wrong from the Qur’ān.

Even the enemies of Ahlul Bayt had the best to say about the Imam:

“He is the one who split knowledge... His heart was pure, so were his knowledge and actions... he had the noblest character.”ⁱ

WHY DO WE NEED KNOWLEDGE?

Knowledge is in everything and is everywhere! Even behind the tiniest object, there’s an amazing amount of knowledge! Also before you do anything you need to **know** what you are doing and why you are doing it. So to live a proper life and do good things we need knowledge. Imam Bāqir (a.s.) says:

“Actions will not be accepted except if they are done with knowledge. And knowledge is not valued unless it is followed by action.”ⁱⁱ

iii Imam al-Bāqir (as) says:

“Revising knowledge for an hour is better than staying up the whole night in worship.”^{iv}

What we learn from our Imams and especially Imam al-Bāqir is that we need to make sure that we get the right knowledge so that when we act according to our knowledge we end up doing the right thing and not the wrong thing. We should not just accept anything that anyone tells us without thinking about it. If we don't know what the right thing is we need to ask an expert so that we do not do the wrong thing. That is why we need our scholars.

RESPECTING SCHOLARS

Scholars are very much respected and praised by the Prophet and Ahlul Bayt because they are the ones who search for true knowledge and give us the best of it to help us in life. So we need to respect them too.

Imam 'Ali says:

“He who shows respect to a scholar has respected his Lord (Allah).”^v

The Holy Prophet (saw) also says:

“... he who sits in the company of the scholars has indeed sat in my company, and whoever sits in my company is as if he has sat in the company of my Lord.”^{vi}

We are also encouraged to teach others what we learn, once we know it well enough. The Holy Prophet says:

ⁱ (ehawza, as-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa, p 201)

ⁱⁱ (*Tuḥaf al-Uqool*, p 348)

ⁱⁱⁱ References:

- ehawza: First semester, course 2, lecture 9 Imam Bāqir, the unvieler of knowledge
- The Scale of Wisdom
- Tuḥaf Al-Uqoul

“The best form of charity is for a man to gain knowledge and then teach it to his fellow brother.”^{vii}

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

“Nobody remains safe from sin unless he guards his tongue.”

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 298)

“Hold the present day in esteem as it is not known to whom tomorrow will belong”

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 299)

Review Questions

Q1. Our Imams have taught us that:

- Scholars are not important
- Scholars should be respected
- It is good to spend time with scholars
- Both b & c

Q2. Imam al-Bāqir was called Ibnul Khariatayn because:

- He was from the children of Imam 'Ali (as)
- He was from the children of the Prophet (saw)
- He was a descendant of both Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (as)

- A Bundle of Flowers

- The photograph of the Imam's grave:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/8540/baqi.gif>

^{iv} (*The Scale of Wisdom*, p 774)

^v (*The Scale of Wisdom*, p 783)

^{vi} (*The Scale of Wisdom* p782)

^{vii} (*The Scale of Wisdom*, p 778)