



*In the Name of Allah*



*the Compassionate, the Merciful*



The Political and Striving Life of Imam Kāzim (P.B.U.H.)  
in the Writings and Lectures of the Supreme Leader of the  
Islamic Revolution of Iran,  
His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei (May Allah prolong his  
lifetime)

Taken from the book of “the Two Hundred and Fifty-Year-Old  
Man”



Commissioned by: The Management of Foreign Pilgrims of  
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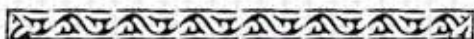
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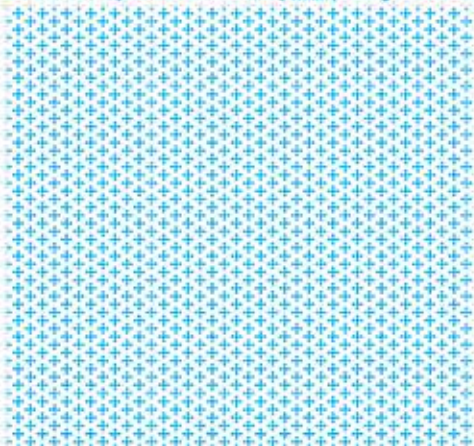
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## Preface

‘Abdul Salām al-Harawī quoted from Imam Riḡā (P.B.U.H.) saying, “May Allah have mercy upon the one who revives our affairs.” Al-Harawī asked, “How should one revive your affairs?” The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “He should learn our knowledge and teach it to people. If people get informed of the virtue of our words, they would follow us.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḡā (P.B.U.H.), vol. 1, p. 307

One of the great blessings of Allah the Almighty to us is that He puts the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) among us to learn how to live a Allah-centered life through observing their lifestyle and to achieve eternal bliss through practicing their useful guidelines.

Mashhad is a piece of Paradise where [the shrine of] the son of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), the eighth star in the sky of Imamate, is located and every year from various parts of Iran and the world, millions of fascinated pilgrims visit this heavenly shrine to water their thirsty souls from the limpid spring of the infallible Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) knowledge. The servants of this shrine,

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«عَنْ عَبْدِ السَّلَامِ الْهَرَوِيِّ عَنِ الرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: رَجِمَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا أَحْيَا أَمْرَنَا  
فَلْتُ كَيْفَ يُجِي أَمْرَكُمْ قَالَ يَتَعَلَّمُ عُلُومَنَا وَيُعَلِّمُهَا النَّاسَ فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ لَوْ عَلِمُوا  
مَحَاسِينَ كَلَامِنَا لَاتَّبَعُونَا.»

Āstān Quds Raḍawī, are all by some means in the service of the pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) so that they can make a pilgrimage with peace of mind and get many benefits from this heavenly shrine.

“The Management of Foreign Pilgrims of Āstān Quds Raḍawī” also has been trying in various forms to introduce culture, manners, and lifestyle of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.)-especially Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) to the lovers and enthusiasts of this school.

The affairs of this management are in line with the Supreme Leader of Iran’s (May Allah prolong his life) statements and the commands of the custodian of Āstān Quds Raḍawī as well as Āstān Quds Raḍawī 20-year vision plan for disseminating Islamic culture and civilization in accordance with needs of non-Iranian pilgrims in order to create insight and spiritual growth in them.

Some good examples of these affairs done in line with serving non-Iranian pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) in the international arena are as following; organizing especial cultural programs, insight circles, professional meetings, scientific conferences, educational classes and workshops, cultural competitions, poetry nights, conversion ceremonies, expert panels and advisory board as well as responding to letters, sending books and cultural products around the world; answering religious and theological questions;





and also Raḍawī Talk chat rooms, production and translation of pure Islamic teachings into various languages. It is the time that the call of Islam is going not only to return the people, who have fallen from their origin in every corner of the world, to the truth but also to return Islam seeking and truth seeking hearts to the [Islamic] sublime and magnanimous teachings which are spreading in the world. It is wished that in such days, reading this book would be found useful for the truth seekers and it would be regarded as a forward step for giving insight to the pilgrims and lovers of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) as well as gaining the satisfaction of Allah.

“O’ Allah bless Muḥammad and Muḥammad’s Household, give me to enjoy a sound guidance which I seek not to replace, a path of truth from which I swerve not, and an intention of right conduct in which I have no doubts! Let me live as long as my life is a free gift in obeying Thee.”<sup>1,2</sup>

The Management of Foreign Pilgrims of

Āstān Quds Raḍawī

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۱. «اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَمَتِّعْنِي بِهُدَى صَالِحٍ لَا أَسْتَبْدِلُ بِهِ، وَ طَرِيقَةٍ حَتَّى لَا أَزِيعَ عَنْهَا، وَبَيِّتِ رُشْدِي لِأَشْكُ فِيهَا، وَعَمِّرْنِي مَا كَانَ عُمْرِي بِذَلِكَ فِي طَاعَتِكَ».

2. *Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, Supplication 20





## The Period of the Imamate of Abī al-Ḥasan, Mūsā b. Jaʿfar (P.B.U.H.)

This 35-year time period—from 148 to 183 A.H.—namely the period of the Imamate of Abī al-Ḥasan, Mūsā b. Jaʿfar (P.B.U.H.) is one of the most important and significant time periods of the lifetime of the Imams (P.B.U.T.). Two of the most powerful ‘Abbasid sultans—Maṅṣūr and Hārūn—and two of the most tyrannical of them—Mahdī and Hādī—ruled in that period. Many of these revolts and uprisings and riots in Khorasan, in African regions, on the Island of Mūṣil, in Deylamān, in Jurjān (Gurgān), in Shām, in Nuṣaybīn, in Egypt, in Azerbaijan, in Armenia, and in other regions and places were repressed and thus became compliant (*munqād*), and new conquests and booties and abundant wealth in the area of the south and the west and the north of the vast Islamic dominion had increased the power and the solidarity of the ‘Abbasid throne. The intellectual and doctrinal movements of this period reached its climax and some of them were born and this mental atmosphere was filled with conflicts and an armament was at the hands of the powerful and a calamity in the Islamic and political awareness of the people and made the field constrained and complicated for the standard bearers of genuine Islamic teachings and the owners of ‘Alawite invitation.

Poetry and art, jurisprudence and tradition, and even asceticism and piety entered into the

service of the lords of power and became the complementary tools to wealth and power. In this period, it was no longer like the last days of the Umayyad period, nor the same as the first ten years after 'Abbasid period or like the period after the death of Hārūn, in each of which the dominant government of the time was threatened in a way; a serious threat did not shake the Caliphate apparatus and did not make the caliph heedless of the circumstances of the of Prophet's Household's (P.B.U.T.) deep and continued invitations.

The only thing that could give the struggle and the intellectual and political movement of the Holy Prophet's Household (P.B.U.T.) and their loyal companions the opportunity to grow and continue was the tireless struggle of these honorable Imams (P.B.U.T.) and resorting to the divine method of *taqīyyah* (prudential concealment). It is in this way that the amazing and horrific holy struggle of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) became evident.

I must say that when the researchers of the history of Islam undertook the inquiry and explanation of the life of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), they did not allocate a merited share of attention and intelligence that should be allocated to the great and unparalleled event of the "long term imprisonment" of this magnanimous Imam and as a result they have remained heedless of the momentous struggle of this honorable Imam.

In the biography of that high-ranking Imam (P.B.U.H.), talking about the various incidents unrelated with one another and an emphasis on the scientific and spiritual and sacred position of that progeny of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and an account of the circumstances of his family, companions, students, scholarly and theological debates, and so on, would remain imperfect and unfinished without regard to the continuous line of struggle that has also taken up all thirty-five-year long Imamate of this honorable man. It is the description and explanation of this line that connects all the components of this gracious life to one another and provides a clear and perfect and directive picture which has a meaning in every phenomenon, incident, and movement.

Why does Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) say to Mufaḡḡal, “Tell only those who are completely trustworthy about the matter of this young man’s Imamate?” And instead of speaking frankly, why does he use allusion to tell ‘Abd al-Raḡmān, “The armor befits his body?” And why does he introduce him to close companions like Ṣafwān Jammāl with a hint and a sign? An finally, why does he mention the name of his son in his last will and testament as successor after four other people, the first of whom is Maṣḡūr ‘Abbāsī and then the governor of Medina and then two women; so that after the death of this Imam, a group of Shī’ite leaders do not know that their successor is this twenty-year old youth? Why in a conversation with Hārūn, who address him saying:

«خليفةتان يجيء اليهما الخراج»<sup>1</sup>

[There are two Caliphs in a country and people pay tax to both of them], he opens his mouth with softness and denial; but firstly, in an address to the pious and persuasively-speaking man named Ḥasan b. ‘Abdullāh he begins to speak about the knowledge of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and then introduces himself as the Imam of “obligatory obedience”, meaning the holder of a position that the ‘Abbasid caliph of that day had the authority to hold?

Why does he order ‘Alī b. Yaḡṡīn, who has a high ranking post in Hārūn’s government and is one of the devotees of the Imam (P.B.U.H.), to do practice *taqīyyah*; whilst he reproaches Ṣafwān Jammāl for serving that very Caliphate apparatus and enjoins him to cut off his relationship with the caliph? How and by what means does he create all those ties and relations in the vast territory of Islam, among friends and his companions and builds a network that extends to China?

Why did Manṣūr, Hādī, Maḥdī, and Hārūn, each at a stage of their own eras of rule, resolved to murder, imprison, and exile him? And why, as is known from some narrations, did the Imam (P.B.U.H.) spend a part of his thirty-five-year period [of Imamate] in suffocation and in the villages of Shām or appear in districts of Tabaristan and why was he pursued by the caliph

1. *Al-Ihtijāj ‘Alā Ahl Al-Lijāj*, vol. 2, p. 389.

of the time and enjoin his companions that if the caliph asked you about me, tell him you did not know me and do not know where I was?

Why does Hārūn pay the utmost homage to that Imam on a trip to Hajj but orders his incarceration and exile on another trip and why does that Imam—during the early days of Hārūn’s caliphate where he adopts the method of gentleness and forgiveness and had released the ‘Alawites from prisons—give a description of Fadak [the oasis of Fadak was part of the bounty given to Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), who gave it as a gift to his daughter, Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.)] that complies to all the vast Islamic countries; to the extent that the caliph using allusion says to that Imam, “So, stand up and sit in my place”? And why is the gentle behavior of this very caliph, after a few years, becomes so cruel that he casts that Imam (P.B.U.H.) into a strict prison and then after many years of incarceration he finds tolerating him even as a prisoner so difficult that he outrageously poisons and martyrs him?

These and hundreds of other conspicuous and meaningful and yet apparently unrelated and sometimes contradictory incidents in the life of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) will be interpreted and become relevant when we observe that continuous sequence that continued from the beginning of the Imamate of that honorable man until the moment of his martyrdom. This sequence is the line of the *jihād* (holy war)

and struggle of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) that had continued throughout the 250-year period in various forms whose goals were, first, to explain the pure Islam, the correct interpretation of the Qur'ān and presenting a clear picture of Islamic knowledge and secondly, to explain the issue of Imamate and political sovereignty in an Islamic society, and thirdly, to endeavor and attempt to establish that society and to realize the goals of the Holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and all the prophets (P.B.U.T.), that is to implement equity and justice and obliterate [those taken as] the partners of Allah from the scene of government and to entrust the reins of government to representatives of Allah and His righteous servants.

Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) had also devoted all his life to this *jihād*; lessons and teaching and jurisprudence and narration and *taqīyyah* and his pedagogy were for this purpose. Of course, his era had its own characteristics; so, his *jihād* also had some especial features in proportion to the time; exactly like the other eight Imams (P.B.U.T.), from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) to Imam Ḥasan 'Askarī (P.B.U.H.) and each one or some of them, had his or their own especial features in their time, and as a consequence, they had their especial features in their own *jihād*, and on the whole their life formed the fourth period of the 250-year life which is also divided into some phases.



## The Tireless Endeavour and Appealing to *Taqīyyah*

The life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) is a surprising and strange one. First, in the private life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.); the matter was clear for those close to the Imam (P.B.U.H.). There was no one from among those close to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) or the elite companions of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) that did not know what Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was making an effort for and Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) himself showed this to others in his statements and allusions and the allegorical actions that he would take. Even in his place of residence, that especial room where Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) would sit in was such that the narrator—who was one of his intimate companions—said, “I went in; I saw that there were three things in Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) room; a rough piece of clothing, a piece of clothing that was far from an ordinary affluent normal state. That is in our modern interpretation it could be understood and it could be said that it is a war uniform. Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) had placed this war uniform there, he was not wearing it; it was a symbolic thing. Then

«وسيفٌ معلقٌ»

[And a suspended sword] he has hung up a sword; he has suspended it from the ceiling or from the wall;

«والمصحف»<sup>1</sup>

[And a sacred volume] and a “Holy Qur’ān”. See what a symbolic thing and what a beautiful thing it is, in the Imam’s private room to which nobody has access except the intimate companions of that Imam, where signs of a man of war and a man of doctrine can be observed. There is a sword that shows that the goal is *jihād*. There is a rough piece of clothing that shows that it is a means of a tough, military, and revolutionary life; and there is a Qur’ān that shows that the goal is this; we want to achieve a Qur’ānic life through these means and we also endure these hardships, but the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) enemies also guessed this.

Firstly, the life of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.), that is the Imamate of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.), started in the most difficult of periods. No period, in my opinion, after Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) period, was more difficult than that of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.). Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate in the year 148 A.H. after the demise of his father Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.). The year 148 A.H. the conditions are such that the ‘Abbasids became disengaged after early conflicts; i.e., after the internal disputes and wars among the ‘Abbasids themselves during their early caliphate. The major insurgents who threatened their caliphate were people like Banī al-Ḥasan–Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh Ḥasan, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abdullāh b.

1. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 100.

Ḥasan, and the rest of the descendants of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) who were all among the rebels against the ‘Abbasids—were all thoroughly defeated and suppressed. The ‘Abbasids killed a large number of the leaders and rebels who were put in a repository and storage that was opened after Manṣūr ‘Abbāsī’s death, where it turned out that he had killed a large number of personalities and individuals and had put their corpses in a place where their skeletons were obviously seen. Manṣūr had killed so many of the Banī Ḥasan and the Hashemites, from among his relatives and of those who were among his close associates, prominent and well-known people that it formed a warehouse of skeletons. When he was disengaged from all these, it was Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) turn. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was poisoned with a trick. No dust existed in the atmosphere of ‘Abbasids’ political life anymore. In such circumstances, where Manṣūr lived in full power and at the height of his apparent rule, time came for the caliphate of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) who was a young person and with all that vigilance to the extent that those who wanted to find out to whom they must refer to now after the demise of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), they could barely find the way and find Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.); and Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) recommended them to be careful; [because] “if they knew that you have heard something from me and that you have been taught by me and were in contact with me, you would be killed.” It

was under such circumstances that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate and began the struggle.

Now, if you ask, well, when Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate, how did he start the struggle, what did he do, whom did he gather, what places did he go to, what events took place for Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in those 35 years; unfortunately, this humble person does not have a clear answer and this is the very thing that is one of our worries that we do not find anything when we research into life in early Islam. No one has any information about an orderly and systemized life of this thirty-five-year period. That I say that no book has been written, nor has any research work been done yet as it should be done, is for this very reason. There are some scattered things from which one can understand much from them all in sum.

One is that during this thirty-five-year period of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) Imamate, four caliphs came to power (in their Caliphate). One (of them) is Maṣṣūr 'Abbāsī who ruled for the first 10 years of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) Imamate. Then, there is his son Maḥdī who ruled (as a caliph) for ten years. Then there is Maḥdī's son, Hādī 'Abbāsī who also ruled (as a caliph) for one year; after him there is Hārūn al-Rashīd who ruled (as a caliph); and for thirteen years of Hārūn's rule (in the position of caliphate), Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was engaged in inviting

(people to Islam) and propagating the Imamate. Each of these four caliphs placed a burden and inflicted pressure on Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

Manṣūr invited the Imam (P.B.U.H.), that is, he exiled him or forcefully summoned him, to Baghdad. Of course, what I have mentioned is just some of those incidents. When a person looks at the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), he finds that these incidents are great in number. One of these instances is that he brought Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Baghdad. In Baghdad, he kept the Imam (P.B.U.H.) under surveillance and put pressure on him for some time. According to what can be implied from the narrations, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) has been put in manifold limitations. This is one time, how long did it take? It is not known for sure. One other time was apparently in the very era of Manṣūr's caliphate when they brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to a place in Iraq called "Abjar", where the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was exiled for some time. The narrator says, "I met with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) at that place; concerning these incidents, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said this and did this". In Maḡdī 'Abbāsī's time, they brought his holiness from Medina to Baghdad at least once. The narrator says, "I was travelling on a route that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was traveling, they were taking the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad for , 'the first time' "-it is implied from this phrase that they had taken him (to Baghdad) several times, which I think it is likely that they had taken the

Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad two or three times in the Mahdī's era. He says, "I met with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and expressed (my) regret, I expressed (my) discomfort. He said, 'No, do not be discomfited, I will return from this journey safe and sound, and they cannot harm me during this journey'." This was Mahdī 'Abbāsī's era.

In Hādī 'Abbāsī's era, they wanted to bring the Imam (P.B.U.H.) back again with the intention to kill him, when one of the jurists around Hādī 'Abbāsī became upset, and felt sorry that they are placing the son of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) under pressure in this way, he interceded, Hādī 'Abbāsī renounced the idea. In Hārūn's era, they also brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad and for a long time on several occasions, which I think it likely that, in Hārūn's era also, they had separated the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from Medina more than once, but it is certain that it was once that they brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and imprisoned him in various places; and one of them, for example, was in Baghdad in various prisons, then in Sindī b. Shāhak's prison where they martyred the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

You see that during these thirty-five, thirty-four years when Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was engaged in propagating the Imamate and performing his duties and with his struggles, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was brought (to Baghdad) several times. In addition to these, the caliphs of the time plotted

against Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) several times with the intention to kill him. In the beginning, when Mahdī 'Abbāsī, the son of Maṣṣūr, became caliph, he told his vizier or *hājib* (chamberlain), Rabī' that he must make arrangements to kill Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). He felt that the main danger is from Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). As I said, in the early days or at the beginning of his caliphate, Hādī 'Abbāsī decided to murder the Imam (P.B.U.H.). He even wrote a poem, saying, "That time has passed when we were tolerant about the Hashemite; I am now bound and determined not to leave anyone of you remain [alive] and Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) will be the first of you that I will destroy." After him, Hārūn al-Rashīd wanted to do the same and he did so; he committed this horrible crime. See what an eventful life this is, the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

In addition to these, there are some very subtle and unclear points in the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was definitely living in a period of secrecy, an underground life that was not known where it was. At that time, the caliph of the time summoned some individuals, inquired from them if they had seen Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), or if they had known where he was. And they answered, "No, they didn't". Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) even said to one of those individuals—as it is narrated—that "They will summon you, they will ask you about me as to where you saw Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.)."

Deny it completely. Say I did not see him.” That is exactly what happened; they imprisoned him; they took him in order to ask him where Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) was.

You see the life of a person is such, whose life is this? A person who just talks about [religious] issues and discusses Islamic doctrinal knowledge, who does not have anything to do with the government, and does not get involved in political struggles, such a person does not get under such pressures. In a narration I even saw that Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) was on the run and hiding in the villages of Shām,

«دَخَلَ مُوسَى بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ بَعْضَ قُرَى الشَّامِ هَارِبًا مُتَتَكِرًا  
فَوَقَعَ فِي غَارٍ»<sup>1</sup>

(Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) entered some villages of Shām, and while he was escaping and hiding he ran into a cave), which is in a tradition; it is narrated that Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) had not been in Medina at all for some time, he was in villages of Shām while being prosecuted by the ruler’s apparatus and was being spied on by their spies. He was wandering from this village to that, from that village to this, in disguise and unidentified. In the meantime, he reaches a cave and enters that cave and there he meets a Christian man. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) debates with him. Even in that very moment he does not overlook his divine obligation which is to explain

1. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 105.



the truth; he talks to that Christian and converts him to Islam and he becomes a Muslim.

### **Jihād of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and His Struggle and Resistance Against Hārūn**

This adventurous life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) is such a life, that you see how passionate and exciting of a life this was. As we look today, we imagine that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was an oppressed, quiet, and submissive man in Medina, whom the officers went to arrest him and brought him to Baghdad or to Kūfa in a certain place or Baṣra and imprisoned him, then they poisoned him and he departed this world; that's all. This was not the case. The case was a long struggle, an organizational struggle, a struggle consisting of many individuals. In all the Islamic horizons, Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) had people who were fond of him. While his paternal cousin, Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) undutiful nephew, who was among those individuals dependent upon the ruling apparatus, would talk to Hārūn about Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), his interpretation was as follows:

«خَلِيفَتَانِ يَجِيءُ إِلَيْهِمَا الخَرَاجُ»

(Two caliphs to whom the tributes are brought.) He said: "Hārūn! Do not think that it is only you who is caliph on the Earth in the Islamic society and people pay you tributes, pay you taxes; there are two caliphs, one is you and one is Mūsā b.

Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). People pay you taxes, they give you money; they also pay taxes to Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and give him money; and this was a reality. He said this out of his maliciousness, he wanted to criticize, but this was a reality. There were people from all over Islamic regions who had connections with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), the thing is that these connections were not at a level that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) could attempt an overt movement of armed fighting.

This was the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life; and as for Hārūn al-Rashīd, when it came to Hārūn al-Rashīd's turn, it was a time that although the Muslim community did not have anyone who oppressed the caliphate's apparatus and he was busy ruling almost effortlessly and worry-free, however the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life and spread of the seventh Imam's (P.B.U.H.) propagation was such that its resolving was not so easy for them, either. But Hārūn was a caliph astute in politics and very perspicacious. One of the things that Hārūn did was that he went to Mecca in person, as Ṭabarī, the famous historian, with some possibility or with certainty or likelihood says, Hārūn al-Rashīd set out with the intention of going on this trip to perform the Hajj pilgrimage; however, his intention was secretly to go to Medina, to see Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) from up close to see what kind of a person he was. Hārūn wanted to know what kind of personality he had that he was so much talked about, had so many friends,

and many of his friends were even in Baghdad? Should one be afraid of him or not? Hārūn did go and had several meetings with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), which were among those extremely important and sensitive meetings. One of them was in Masjid al-Ḥarām in which Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) apparently encountered Hārūn anonymously and bitter talks were exchanged between them and Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) shattered the dignity of Caliph in the presence of the audience. Here, he did not recognize Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

After he comes to Medina, he has several meetings with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) that are important meetings. I will mention this much for those who like to study, who like to do research and are interested in these issues to go and work. These are the conjectures; they should go look for it and find it. Among other things that he does now in these meetings, Hārūn al-Rashīd would do all those things that must be done in order to take possession of an opposing human being and a true struggler. Threatening, bribery, deception, he did all of these things.

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In the beginning when he assumed the Caliphate and came to Medina, as you have heard, Hārūn praised Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and showed him respect and you know Ma'mūn's famous story where he relates that, "We went [to see Hārūn], the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was riding a mule and

entered the district where Hārūn was sitting and when he wanted to get off the mule, Hārūn swore the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to go to the place where he had set up his camp on his mount (riding and not getting off), and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came on his mount." Then Hārūn showed him respect and praised him, and told him this and that. Then when he left, he (Hārūn) ordered us to 'take his [mount's] stirrup'. Of course, what is interesting is that in this very narration he says that Ma'mūn says, "Hārūn, my father, used to give a prize of five thousand or ten thousand dinars to everyone, but he would give Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) a prize of only two hundred dinars. Whereas when he asked the Imam (P.B.U.H.) how he was, he said he had many children, he had many problems, and his financial situation was not good." Now, in this humble person's opinion, Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) words to Hārūn is quite interesting, too. That is they are very familiar and understandable for us as to how it can be that a man can disclose to someone like Hārūn that his situation was not good and it was hard to live on and such things. In no way does this mean begging and humility. If a person has done so he knows how this is.

I know that during the period of the tyrannical regime and the period of repression many of you have naturally done many of these things and this is entirely understandable. Anyway, after the Imam (P.B.U.H.) says these things, which calls for Hārūn to say, "Well, very well, so, for example, these five thousand dinars are yours." But he just

gives him two hundred dinars. He says, "After I asked my father, why did you do so? He said, 'If I gave this money, it would mean that he would mobilize the armed forces of Khorasan, he would cause two thousand to rise against me'." This was Hārūn's impression and he had figured out it right. Now, some people imagine that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was backbiting; no, the truth of the matter was merely that the time when Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was struggling against Hārūn, if indeed there was money in (the treasury of) the government apparatus there would have been many people who were ready and willing to use a sword alongside Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and we have seen such an example among those other than the Imams (P.B.U.T.), in case that if the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had risen up, people like Ḥusayn b. 'Alī—the Martyr of Fakh—was before Hārūn in the time of Mūsā al-Hādī and more and more others. It was very clear that their action is an indication of how many people the Imams (P.B.U.T.) could have gathered round them, and Hārūn had rightly understood.

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One of the things that he talks to Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) about is that he says, "You Hashemite, 'Alī's household, were deprived of Fadak, they took Fadak away from you, now I want to give Fadak back to you; say where Fadak is and what the boundaries of Fadak are so that I can return it to you." Well, it is clear

that this is a deception that he says he wants to return Fadak, [he is pretending] as a person who wants to return the right of the Household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to them and build up a reputation for himself. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) says, “Very well, now that you want to give Fadak back to me, I will specify the boundaries of Fadak for you.” They agree to specify the boundaries of Fadak. The boundaries that Imam Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) ascertained for Fadak encompassed all the Muslim countries of that day; this is what Fadak means. That is, [addressing Hārūn, he says] you imagine that our dispute of that day was over a garden, that it was over a few palm trees, this is simple-minded. Our problem that day was not several palm trees or the garden of Fadak, either; the problem was the Caliphate of the Prophet (P.B.U.H & H.H.), the problem of Islamic government. However, that day what was thought it would completely deprive us of this right, was taking back Fadak. So we would insist upon the matter of the garden of Fadak. Today that thing that you have usurped before our very eyes, which does not have any value, is not the garden of Fadak. What you have usurped is an Islamic society, an Islamic country. Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) mentions the fourfold boundaries and says, “This is Fadak, hurry up now, if you want to give it [back], give it. That is Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) explicitly raises the matter of claiming sovereignty and Caliphate.

«خُذْ فَدَكَ حَتَّى أُرَدَّهَا إِلَيْكَ»

[Tell me the extent of Fadak I will return it back to you.]

Delineate it; specify it, until I give Fadak back to you. At first, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) refuses, then He says,

«لَا أَخْذُهَا إِلَّا بِمَجْدُودِهَا»

[I won't take it except with its boundaries.]

If you give it back with its original boundaries, I will take it. Then he (Hārūn) says, "Very well, specify its boundaries. It is very interesting that at that time the Imam (P.B.U.H.) specifies a boundary for Fadak, its boundary is this:

«أَمَّا الْحَدُّ الْأَوَّلُ فَعَدَنُ»

[One boundary is Aden.] Now they are sitting, for example, in Medina or Baghdad and they are talking to each other. One bound is Aden, the farthest end of the Arabian Peninsula.

«فَتَغَيَّرَ وَجْهُ الرَّشِيدِ»

[Then the color of Rashīd's face changed.]

«وَقَالَ تَيْهَاءً»

[And Hārūn said, "O!"] Hārūn said: "How strange!"

«وَقَالَ وَالْحَدَّ الثَّانِي سَمَرْقَنْدُ»

[Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, "The second boundary of

Fadak is Samarqand.”] Samarqand is the second boundary of Fadak.

«فأربد وجهه»

[Hārūn’s face became dark.]

«والحدّ الثالث افريقيا»

[The third boundary is Africa] The third boundary is Tunisia.

«فأسودّ وجهه»

[His face became black.] Hārūn al-Rashīd’s face turned black.

«وقال هيه»

[He said, “Heh heh!”] “How strange! What are you saying?”

«قال والرابع سيف البحر مما يلي الجزر أرمينيا»

[He said, “The fourth boundary is the islands and shores and Armenia.”] He (the Imam (P.B.U.H.)) said, “The fourth boundary is the margins of the seas and islands, like Armīniyya (modern Armenia) or such and such a place, that farthest end like the Mediterranean Sea and those places.

«فقال الرشيد لم يبق شيء»

[Al-Rashīd said, “Then nothing remains for us”.]

«فتحوّل إلى مجلسي»

[“Stand up and sit on my place”.]



«قال موسى بن جعفر عليه السلام قد أعلمتك أنني إن  
حدّدتها لم تردّها»

[Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) said, "Indeed, I knew before that if I limit it, I would not be reimbursed."] "I said that if I limit it, you will not return it."

«فعند ذلك عزم على قتله»<sup>1</sup>

[So at that time he was determined to kill him."] When they got to this point, Hārūn became determined to kill Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

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### Martyrdom of Imam Kāzim (P.B.U.H.)

Upon his entrance to the shrine of the Prophet in Medina at the time when Hārūn al-Rashīd wanted to pretend and show his kinship with the Prophet (P.B.U.H & H.H.) in front of the Muslims who were watching the caliph's pilgrimage on this journey, he goes near the shrine when he wants to send his salutations to the grave of the Prophet (P.B.U.H & H.H.), he says:

«السلام عليك يا بن العمّ»

[Peace be upon you, O cousin!]

He does not say:

«يا رسول الله»

1. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 144.

[O Messenger of Allah;]

O cousin, Peace Be Upon You, meaning that I am the cousin of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) immediately comes and stands in front of the shrine and He says:

«السلام عليك يا أبتاه»

[Peace Be Upon You, O Father,] meaning that if the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is your cousin, he is my father. He just discredits that manner of hypocrisy in that same assembly.

The people who were around Hārūn al-Rashīd also felt that Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) existence was the greatest danger for the caliphate apparatus. A man from among the friends of the ruling state and the monarchy was standing there, saw that a person came, riding on a donkey, without formalities, without being mounted on an expensive horse that indicated that he was among the aristocrats; when he got near, the people opened the way; apparently it was in this very trip to Medina, I suppose, and he entered, [that man] asked who was this man that when he came the people showed humbleness and respect to him and those around the caliph opened the way so that he could enter. They said, "He is Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.)". As soon as they said it is Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), he (that man) said, "Woe unto the foolishness of this nation, meaning the 'Abbasids, who show such

respect to someone who wants them dead and will overthrow their government?” They knew that the danger of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) to the caliphate apparatus is the danger of a great leader who has vast knowledge, has piety and servitude and moral soundness that all those who know him, see these characteristics in him. He has a lot of friends and adherents throughout the Muslim world; he is so brave that he has no fear or apprehension of any power that stands against him. Therefore, he speaks and expresses his opinion so recklessly against the superficial grandeur of Hārūn’s monarchy.

Such a combative personality, a warrior for the faith (*mujāhid*), one who is connected to and trusting in Allah, who has friends throughout the Muslim world and has plans to implement an Islamic ruling system. This is the greatest danger for Hārūn’s government. Therefore, Hārūn decided to remove this danger out of his way. Of course, he was a man of politics; he did not do this all at once. At first, he was willing to do this indirectly. Then he saw that he had better imprison Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.), perhaps he could make a deal with him while he was in prison, he could give him privileges, force him into acceptance submission to him by putting him under pressure. Therefore he ordered to arrest Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) in Medina, albeit in a way that it would not hurt the feelings of the people of Medina and thus they would not find out what happened to Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.).

Therefore they prepared two mounts and camel litters, one of them was sent to Iraq and one to Shām so that people would not find out where they had taken Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). They brought Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) to the center of the caliphate in Baghdad, imprisoned him there and this imprisonment lasted a long time. Of course, it is possibly not certain that they had freed the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from prison once and arrested him again; what is certain is that the last time they arrested the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was with the intention of arresting the Imam (P.B.U.H.) in order to murder him in prison and that is what they did.

Inside prison, of course, Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) personality is like the same personality of a luminescent torch that illuminates everything around him. You see this is the truth, this is the movement of the Islamic thought and a holy war that relies on the Qur'ān; it will never stop even in the most difficult conditions. ... And this is what exactly Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) did, and there are numerous stories and narrations in this regard. One of the most interesting of these is that the famous Sindī b. Shāhak who, as you know, was a very strong and harsh prison guard and one of the 'Abbasid devotees and one of those loyal to the monarchy and caliphate apparatus of that day and was Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) prison guard who had imprisoned Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in a very intolerable basement in his house. Sindī b. Shāhak's family would sometimes look into the



prison through an opening. The living condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) affected them and the seed of love and affectation for the Household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) was sown in the hearts of Sindī b. Shāhak's family. One of Sindī b. Shāhak's children, named Kashājim, is one of the great and distinguished dignitaries of Shi'ism. Perhaps one or two generations after Sindī b. Shāhak, one of children is Kashājim who is one of the greatest literati, poets, and distinguished figures of Shi'ism of his time, which has been mentioned by everyone. His name is Kashājim al-Sindī who is one of Sindī b. Shāhak's sons.

This is the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life, which he passed in prison in such a way. Of course they (officials) came inside the prison several times and threatened the Imam (P.B.U.H.), they tried to bribe him, they wanted to make the Imam (P.B.U.H.) happy and contented, but that great person resisted and it was that same resistance that has safeguarded the Qur'ān and Islam until today. Know that our Imams' (P.B.U.T.) endurance against the course of corruption made us able today to find the true Islam; today, generations of Muslims and generations of human beings can find something called Islam, something called the Qur'ān, something called the traditions (Sunnah) of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in books, both in Shi'ite and Sunnite books. If it was not for the Imams (P.B.U.T.) uncompromising, struggle-seeking movement during these 250 years, know that

those who wrote to receive wages and spoke to receive wages in the Umayyad and 'Abbasid eras would progressively change and uproot Islam so much that nothing would have remained of Islam after a couple of centuries. Either there would remain no Qur'ān or a distorted Qur'ān would remain. It was these prideful flags, these illuminating torches and these towering minarets that stood in the history of Islam and radiated the rays of Islam so much that the distorters and those who wished to invert the truth in a darkened sphere could not achieve that darkness. The disciples of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) belonged to all the sects of Islam they were not exclusive to Shi'ism; there were many of those who did not believe in the ideal of Shi'ism, that is the Shi'ite Imamate; there were many people who were the disciples of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), they would learn the Qur'ān, interpretation, the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) narrations and traditions from the Imams (P.B.U.T.). It was these resistances which safeguarded Islam to this day. They eventually poisoned Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in prison. One of the most poignant instances of the history of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) is the very martyrdom of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Of course, even there [in prison] they wanted to pretend. In the last days, Sindī b. Shāhak brought some of the heads, outstanding personalities, and dignitaries that were in Baghdad to see the Imam (P.B.U.H.). He said, "See, his living condition is fine; he does not have any problems." There the

Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “Yes, but also know that they have poisoned me.” And they poisoned the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with a few dates and under the heavy load of shackles and chains that they had locked around his neck, hands, and feet. In prison, the spirit of this noble, oppressed, and beloved Imam (P.B.U.H.) joined the Supreme Emperyan and was martyred. Of course, they were still afraid; they were also afraid of Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) corpse and they were also afraid of Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) grave. So when they brought Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) corpse out of the prison, they chanted slogans that meant that this was someone who had risen up against the government apparatus; they said these things to overshadow Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) personality. The atmosphere of Baghdad was so untrustworthy that one of elements of the government itself, Sulaymān b. Ja’far—that is, Sulaymān b. Ja’far b. Maṣūr ‘Abbāsī, Hārūn’s cousin, who was one of the ‘Abbasid aristocrats—saw that the situation was in such a way that it would possibly make trouble for them; so, he undertook another role and brought Mūsā b. Ja’far’s corpse, and shrouded it with an expensive and precious shroud. Then they took the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with respect to the graveyard of the Quraysh, which is known today as Kāzimain (Two Kāzims) located near Baghdad, and buried him there. In this way, the life of Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.), which was thoroughly a holy war and struggle, came to an end here.

## The Arabic Transliteration Guide

ا	alif	a ā (long vowel)	ط	ṭā	t/ṭ
ب	bā	B	ظ	ẓā	ẓ
ت	tā	T	ع	'ayn	'
ث	thā	Th	غ	Ghayn	gh
ج	jīm	J	ف	Fā	f
ح	ḥā	ḥ/H	ق	Qāf	q
خ	khā	Kh	ك	Kāf	k
د	dāl	D	ل	Lām	l
ذ	dhāl	Dh	م	Mīm	m
ر	rā	R	ن	Nūn	n
ز	zā	Z	هـ	Hā	h
س	sīn	S	و	Wāw	w (consonantal) ū (long vowel)
ش	shīn	Sh	ي	Yā	y (consonantal) ī (long vowel)
ص	ṣād	Ṣ/ṣ	ء	Hamza	,
ض	ḍād	ḍ/Ḍ			
Short vowels	fathā		َ		= a
	Kasra		ِ		= i
	ḍamma		ُ		= u





## **Book Reading Competition**

The following questions are chosen from the book context. To participate in the competition, you may choose one of the following methods:

- 1) Complete the answer sheet and email it to [iro@imamrezashrine.com](mailto:iro@imamrezashrine.com).
- 2) Go to [www.imamrezashrine.aqr.ir](http://www.imamrezashrine.aqr.ir) and fill out the answer sheet.

1. Who were the governors in the period of Imam Kāzim (P.B.U.H.)?

- a) Maṣṣūr and Ḥārūn from Banī ‘Abbās
- b) Marvān and Maṣṣūr from Banī Ummayyid
- c) Maḥdī and Hadī from Banī ‘Abbās
- d) Both a and c

2. How was the status of poetry, art, jurisprudence and tradition, in the period of Imam Kāzim (P.B.U.H.)?

- a) Poetry and art were at the governors’ service but jurisprudence and tradition were at the Shi’ism’s service.
- b) Poetry and art, jurisprudence and tradition were all at the service of religion not the Shi’ite.
- c) Poetry and art, jurisprudence and tradition, and even asceticism and piety entered into the service of the lords of power.
- d) All the above-mentioned flows were were at the Shi’ism’s service.

3. How were the forms of jihād, struggle, and resistance of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) throughout the 250-year period? How was the form of Imam Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) jihād?

- a) to explain the pure Islam, the correct interpretation of the Qur’ān and presenting a clear picture of Islamic knowledge
- b) to explain the issue of Imamate and political sovereignty in an Islamic society
- c) to endeavor and attempt to establish that



society and to realize the goals of the Holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and all the prophets (P.B.U.T.), that is to implement equity and justice and obliterate [those taken as] the partners of Allah from the scene of government

d) All above

4. What was Imam's (P.B.U.H.) answer when Harūn al-Rashīd asked him about the boundary of Fadak? And what did it mean?

a) By determining a palm tree in Medina and his goal was restoring right to Ahl al-Bait (P.B.U.T.).

b) Imam's description of Fadak [the oasis of Fadak was part of the bounty given to Prophet Muḡammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), who gave it as a gift to his daughter, Fāṭima] complies to all the vast Islamic countries.

c) Both a & b

d) Determining and expressing Boundaries of *Fadak* Garden and the entire Islamic world.

5. 'Abbasids felt that Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) existence was the greatest danger for the caliphate apparatus, because...

a) he is a great danger of a great leader who has vast knowledge, has piety and servitude and moral soundness that all those who know him, see these characteristics in him. He has a lot of friends and adherents throughout the Muslim world.

b) he is so brave that he has no fear or apprehension of any power that stands against him.

c) he speaks and expresses his opinion so recklessly against the superficial grandeur of Hārūn's monarchy.

d) All above

### Personal Details

First Name: .....

Surname: .....

Tel.: .....

E-mail: .....

Answer Sheet				
Row	a	b	c	d
1				
2				
3				
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