

(Virtues of Hazrat Imam Taqi Al-Jawad (AS

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In respect of his manners and qualities, Imam Muhammad Taqi (A.S.) – the ninth infallible successor of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) – occupied that lofty position of humaneness that is the distinguished characteristic of the Prophet (SAW) and his progeny. The predominant feature of his life style was to meet everybody with humility, to help the needy, to maintain human equality and observe simplicity.

To offer help to the indigent secretly, to treat not only friends but even adversaries kindly and politely, to be attentive in entertaining the guests and to keep the springs of bounties overflowing for those thirsty for religious and scholarly knowledge, were his chief occupations. His life pattern was the same as that of the other members of this chain of the infallible ones whose life history has already been given in earlier chapters.

The worldly people who did not have a full idea of the greatness of his soul must have certainly been under the impression that the very fact of a small child becoming the son-in-law of the emperor of a great Muslim empire must alter his thoughts, nature, behavior and habits and, thus, completely remold his life style. In fact, this must have been an important objective before Mamun's shortsighted vision.

The animus of the Abbasids or the Umayyad kings was not so much against the members of the Prophet' (SAW) progeny as for their extraordinary God-given qualities. They were ever endeavouring to break that centre of lofty manners and humaneness that was established at Madinah and had become nucleus of exemplary spirituality against the material power of the realm.

Accordingly, in desperation, they devised and tried various means with a view to achieving this objective. The demand of oath of allegiance from Imam Husain (A.S.) was one form of it and the appointment of Imam Reza (A.S.) as heir apparent another. Only outwardly in one case the method of dealing with the situation was hostile and in the other, seemingly devotional. Just as Imam Husain (A.S.) was martyred when he refused to pledge allegiance, Imam Reza (A.S.), being out of step with the materialistic objectives of the regime, was silenced forever through poisoning.

Now from the point of Mamun it was a valuable opportunity. The successor of Imam Reza (A.S.) was a mere child of about eight years who had been separated from his father three years back. The political sagacity of Mamun made him wrongly expect that it would be very

easy to bring over that child to his own way of life after which the still and silent but extremely dangerous centre that was firmly established against the government of the day would be destroyed forever.

He did not deem the failure of Mamun in his plan related to the appointment of Imam Reza (A.S.) as the heir apparent as a ground for any disappointment. He felt so because the life pattern of Imam Reza (A.S.) was firmly based on a particular principle. If it did not alter, it did not follow that Imam Muhammad Taqi (A.S.), after having been brought in the palace environments right from the early formative years, would stick to his ancestor's principled way of life.

Except those who were conversant with the God-gifted perfections of these chosen beings, everybody in those days must have been of Mamun's mind. But the world was amazed to see that the eight year old child who had been made the son in-law of the emperor of the Islamic domain, was so steadfast in following his family traditions of sobriety and uprightness and its principles that he refused to stay in the imperial palace after marriage and, while in Baghdad insisted on residing in a rented house.

An idea of the strong will power of Imam Muhammad Taqi (A.S.) can be had from another event. Usually when the bride's family financially occupies a higher place it prefers that the son in-law should reside with it in the same house; if not, at least in the same town... However, Imam Muhammad Taqi (A.S.), only a year after the marriage, forced Mamun to let him (and his wife) return to Madinah. Certainly, this must have been extremely unpalatable for a loving father and a powerful potentate like Mamun. Nevertheless, he had to bear the pain of separation of his daughter and let the Imam (A.S.) return to Madinah along with Ummul Fazl. After coming to Madinah the style of functioning of the household was the same as before. There was no gatekeeper, no check and restraint, no pomp and show, no particular meeting time and no discrimination in dealings with the visitors. Mostly the Imam (A.S.) used to sit in the Prophet's mosque where Muslims in general came to benefit from his preaching and counseling.

Narrators of traditions used to put questions about traditions and scholars would place their problems before him and seek solutions. It was evident that it was surely the successor of Imam Jafar Sadiq (A.S.) who, occupying the same seat of learning was providing guidance to the people.

With regard to household affairs and matters relating to conjugal life, he kept Ummul Fazl confined within the bound within which his ancestors used to keep their wives. He did not at all care for the fact that his wife was the daughter of the emperor of his time. Therefore, in the

presence of Ummul Fazl he married an esteemed woman from amongst the progeny of Hazrat Ammar Yasir. The chain of Imamate should continue the divine will through this woman who became the mother of Imam Ali Naqi (A.S.).

Ummul Fazl dispatched a written complaint to her father in his regard. For Mamun also this event must not have been any less painful. However, he had now no option but to bear with what he had himself done. He wrote to Ummul Fazl in reply that his objective in marrying her with Abu Jafar (A.S.) was not to make unlawful for him that God has made lawful. He forbade her writing such letters to him in future.

By writing this reply, he had only tried to wipe off his own humiliation. There are instances before us where in the presence of a venerable lady, from religious point of view, the husband did not take a second wife during her lifetime. Hazrat Ali (A.S.) and Hazrat Fatima Zahra (A.S...) are examples in this respect.

In their lifetime, neither the esteemed Prophet (SAW) nor Hazrat Ali Murtaza (A.S.) even thought of having a second wife. However, to confer this distinction on the daughter of an emperor simply because she was the daughter of such a person, violated the Islamic spirit of which the progeny of Muhammad (SAW) was guardian. Therefore, Imam Muhammad Taqi (A.S.) considered it his duty to follow a path different from theirs (that is, having a second wife .(in the lifetime of the first one