Imam Musa Kazim is the Bab-ul-Hawaij (The Door to Fulfilling (Peoples Needs

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Imam musa bin Ja"far al-Kazim (A.S.) was born on Safar 7, 128 A.H. at Abwa", midway between the cities of Makkah and Madinah. It is the very place where the mother of the Noble Prophet (S.A.W.), Amina, the daughter of Wahab, had passed away and was buried.

Imam al-Kadhim (A.S.) lived under the care of his father, Imam Ja"far al-Sadiq (A.S.) and leaned from the school of his father, to which the religious scholars, jurisprudents (religious experts), philosophers and preachers flocked. He inherited, from his father, his knowledge, manners and morals. He came to epitomize high morals, generosity, asceticism, patience, bravery, perseverance and holy striving (jihad). During the Imamate fo his father he directed his attention to acquiring knowledge, and after his father"s death, he shouldered the responsibility of leading the ummah.

Imam Ja"far al-Sadiq (A.S.) appointed his son, musa al-Kazim(A.S.), as his successor to the office of Imamate.

Ali bin Ja"far, the brother of Imam musa al-Kazim (A.S.), a trustworthy narrator, is reported to have said, "I heard Abu-Ja"far bin Muhammad (A.S.) saying to some people from his entourage and close friends, "Take good care of this son of mine, musa. He is the best of my sons, and the best among whom I leave after me. He shall be my successor and the proof of Allah, the Exalted, over all his servants after me.""

The Prominent Features of the Imam"s Character

Imam al-Kazim (A.S.) earned many nicknames among the people for his unique and refined character. He was called "Abd Salih" (The Noble Servant) for his perfect character and manners, "Zainul-Mujtahideen" (The Ornament of Toilers) for his lengthy worship and supplication, "al-Kazim" (The one Who Curbs His Anger) for his extreme endurance, patience and bravery in the of adversities, his curbing of pain and anger, and for being kind to those who harassed him, "Bab al-Hawaij" (The Door to Fulfilling Peoples" Needs) for his great position in the fulfilling peoples" desires and needs when one beseeches Allah, invoking his name.

Imam al-Kazim"s Character:

The secret behind the greatness of Ahlul-Bait (A.S.) and their perfection, which sets them apart from the rest of the people, is their divine knowledge, and their absolute devotion to the One and Only Allah, the embodiment of grace and absolute, pure perfection.

They were whole-heartedly devoted to Allah, fully grasping the monotheistic concepts which were reflected clearly in their conduct, attitudes, and deeds.

It is not surprising, then, to see in their path refrainment from enjoying this world"s pleasures,thinking little of them, and overlooking the pleasures of life, giving of themselves and their wealth so as to seek Allah"s pleasure, working hard to save humanity and guiding it on the right path of belief and goodness.

The divine path of Imam al-Kazim (A.S.) was the best proof of such meanings.

It was said that:

"He was the best one among the memorizers of the Book of Allah, the Exalted. He had a melodious voice when he recited the Holy Qur"an, those present would be so moved that they would break into tears for merely listening to him.People in the city of Madinah called him "Zainul-Mujtahideen"" The Ornament of the Toilers.""

His closeness to Allah, his longing to meet Him and his endeavours to please Him, made him journey to the Sacred House of Allah in Makkah on foot. It was reported that he had gone to Makkah, along with his brother,Ali bin Ja"far, four times on foot. It took 26 days for him to reach Makkah the first time,25 days the second time, 24 days the time, and 21 days the fourth time.

It is said that "when he stood in the presence of Allah, to perform his prayer, tears would roll down his face." He used to ask Allah"s forgiveness and thank Him for his graces.

Hisham bin Ahmar is reported to have said: "I was riding with Abul-Hassan (musa bin Ja"far) on a street in Madinah when he dismounted and prostrated. He remained so, motionless, for a lengthy period of time. Then, he raised his head and remounted. "May I be your ransom", asked I. "I saw you going down in a long prostration?" He replied; "I remembered a grace which Allah favoured me with. I loved to thank my Lord for it."

Sheikh Mufid said: "He used to weep out of his fear of Allah until his beard became wet. He was distinguished by his care for his family and relatives, whom he would visit and help if they needed him. In the dead of night, he used to call on the poor people of Madinah, carrying to them, in a basket, gold Dinars and silver Dirhams, flour and dates. He would deliver all that to them without letting them know who he was, or who the donor was."

When Harun,the Abbasid caliph placed Imam al-Kazim (A.S.) in a prison, one of the spies, who kept a watchful eye on him, heard the Imam (A.S.) saying, "O my Lord, You know that I had been asking you to spare me time to devote myself to Your service. You have done that. Praise be to You."

Regarding his attitude with people, Sheikh Mufid, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "Abul-

Hassan was the most devoted worshipper among the people of his time, and the most versed in fiqh. He was the most generous, and the kindest of all people..."

He retutned the bad with good, lavishing his kindness on all people. Such bags were sent to the needy and indebted. The money-bags of Imam musa bin Ja"far (A.S.) donated to poor people became proverbial.

Such was the Imam"s (A.S.) manner, and his tolerance. He used to buy and emancipate the slaves and set them free for the sake of Allah, demanding nothing in return.

His School and Knowledge

Imam al-Kazim"s era was abundant with ideological and philosophical currents. Divergent views on fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Qur"anic exegesis and science of traditions emerged. That era was the most critical in the life of Muslims. Atheism, polytheism, and hyperbole penetrated the Muslim society, and new ideological trends, with conflicting fiqh decrees. Some judges and jurisprudents (religious experts) distorted their judgements and decrees so as to suit the rulers. Distorted and fabricated traditions were spread in great quantities. Though extremely restricted and beleaguered, Imam musa bin Ja"far (A.S.) did not give up his mission. It was his top priority to correct the Islamic march by showing the ummah what was original and what was non-Islamic. Aided by his disciples, he faced the new ideological trends, exactly as his father,Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (A.S.), and his grandfather, Imam al-Baqir (A.S.), had done before, and displayed their flaws, and demonstrated that they were only distorted views of the original Islam. As for fiqh, he enriched it with his explanation, statements and deductions. By so doing, the Imam (A.S.) solidified the pillars of Islamic laws. He kept the school of Ahlul-Bait (A.S.) original, and enriched it.

Biographical books and those related to traditions maintain that upward to 300 scholars had quoted from Imam musa bin Ja"far (A.S.). Proudly, history cites a list of Imam"s students who were distinguiched as great and prominent religious scholars. Most of them authored and .compiled rich, and great books on the different sciences of Islam