Imam al-Baqir (A.S.) Urguing the Muslims to Strive Hard

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, presented during his lectures and his behavior the most important economic research. The following are some of them:

1. The Necessity of Improving Livelihood

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, urged the Moslem community to strive hard to seek a livelihood. Thus, man is able to afford his family a luxurious life. Meanwhile he is able to avoid poverty and unhappiness. In this connection, the Ima`m, peace be on him, said: "Whoever strives hard to seek livelihood, becomes tranquil, his provision becomes light, and his family leads a life of ease and comfort.

He, peace be on him, said: "Through wide morals livelihood is good.

Indeed, if man strives hard to seek livelihood, he is able to secure an economic life full of welfare, blessings, tranquillity, and stability.

2. Warning from Laziness

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, warned the Moslems community from laziness. That is because laziness paralyzes economic life, freezes man's abilities, and spreads corruption in the earth. He, peace be on him, said: "Laziness damages the religion and the world.

Laziness damages the religion, for it prevents man from mentioning the Lord's name and His obligations and His duties. (219)

Rather, the lazy person neglects religious obligations. So, which harm is greater than this harm? Laziness damages the world, for the lazy person always inclines to inactivity and wishes for a miserable life full of needs and poverty. He does not enter the fields of work that secure for him welfare and happiness.

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, warned one of his children from laziness. He said to him: "Beware of laziness and boredom, for they are the key for all evil things. Whoever is lazy, does not carry out a right (work). Whoever is tired, is impatient toward a right (work).

Surely, Islam wants man to work, produce, respect people's rights, associate with them, and perform the obligations imposed on him.However, when the person is afflicted by the disease of laziness, he neglects Allah's and people's rights.

3. Al-Ba`qir detested those who left Work

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, detested those who left work. He thought that leaving work would weaken production, increase unemployed, and spread economic crises in the country. He, peace be on him, said: "I hate the jobless person who lies on his back and says: O Allah, give me. He asks Allah to do him a favor, while the small ant comes out of its society to seek its livelihood.(Al-'Amal wa Huqquq al-'Amil fi al-Islam, p. 139)

4. Work is Obedience to Allah

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, thought that work was obedience to Allah. So, he himself cultivated his own land. Mohammed b. al-Munzir said: "I went out to one of the suburbs of Medina. There I met Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir) Mohammed b. 'Ali, peace be on him. He was a well-built man and he leaning on two servant boys. Either they were black slaves of his or they were retainers of his.

So, I said to myself: Glory belongs to Allah. Here is a venerable leader (shaykh) of Quraysh out at this time and in these conditions seeking worldly (advantage). I must warn him. So, I approached him and greeted him. He returned my greeting with anger. The sweat was pouring down him. I said to him: May Allah make you righteous, does a venerable leader of Quraysh go out at this hour for worldly (advantage)? What would you do if death came upon you at this hour?

However, the Ima`m answered him with Islamic words: "Let death come upon me when I am obedient to Allah, the great and Almighty. I work to prevent my soul and my family from you and the people. I fear death when it comes upon me and I am disobedient to Allah. So, Mohammed felt shame. He was unable to answer the Ima`m. Thus, he said to him: "You are right. May Allah have mercy on you. I wanted to warn you, but you have warned me.

Indeed work is obedience to Allah, as the Ima`m said. For work prevents the soul and the family from asking people for alms.