(.Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (A.S

Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) was born on 10th day of the month of Rajab, in the year 195 A.H. in Madina - the city of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.), under the care of his father, Imam Ali bin Musa al-Reza (A.S.) who was qualified with the leadership (Imamate) and its qualifications, a lofty status, the position of leadership in the ummah and in the sciences of Islamic Shari'a and its laws. The Imam (A.S.) was born in a period full of events and political situations, conflicts, and the tension of events of the Abbasid caliphate between Amin and Ma'moon, the two sons of Harun Rashid.

Those political events and the situations of the conflict which was going on between the two brothers, the Abbasid caliphs, never ended without reflecting their effects on the life of Imam al-Reza (A.S.) attracted the attention of the Muslims -in the city of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) - including religious scholars, jurisprudents, governors, and common people. Thus, the political view of the caliph, Ma'mun, was directed towards him and, therefore, summoned him to the capital of his rulership (Merv) in the year 200 A.H. and appointed him as heir so that the caliphate would be transferred to him after Ma'mun's death.

The Imam Reza (A.S..) was forced to leave Madina and move towards the city of 'Merv' (in Khurasan - Iran) to accept Ma'mun's invitation after many refusals and abstentions. Before moving to merv, he took with him, his son, Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (a.s.), then, he (a.s.) started out from Madina towards Mecca in order to pay a visit to the Sacred House (Ka'ba) and, also, to say farewell to it. Imam al-Reza (A.S.) performed the hajj (pilgrimage) with his son, al-Jawad, who was only four years at that time.

Indeed, the young Imam expressed his adherence and love for his father by his insistence to stay under the care of the holy embrace. It was difficult for him to return home (Madinah), alone, and depart from his father, who wrote, in his farewell letter to the Sacred House, that he would not return.

The moments of farewell ended and the hour of departure approached; the young Imam al-Jawad(A.S.) returned home (to Madinah), bearing the yearnings of love, the adherence of a son for his father; his father moved towards the city of Merv while his heart departed to Madina, following the procession of the beloved al-Jawad.

Imam al-Reza's Letters to his Son, al-Jawad (A.S.)

Arriving at the city of Merv, the, then, capital of the Abbasid caliphate, Imam al-Reza (A.S.)

rested there while his heart still inclined towards his son. From there, he (A.S.) began to correspond, address, advise, guide and take care of him. Historians state the fact that Imam al-Reza (A.S.) used to address his son al-Jawad (A.S.), with honour and glory in his correspondences and call him by his surname 'Abu Ja'far'.

The Divine Leadership of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.)

The period of transferring the leadership to Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (A.S.) faced a dangerous problem which caused debates and arguments concerning the personality of Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (A.S.) because of his youth.He (A.S.) was young, at the age of seven, when his father passed away. Books of history and biographies record some of these discussions about the personality of the young Imam (A.S.) and his capability for the leadership at that age. When Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (a.s.) was born, the same questions were sent to Imam al-Rida in order for them to know who would be the Imam after al-Reza (A.S.). Was not Muhammad al-Jawad (A.S..) a child? And how could he bear the responsibility of the leadership and its affairs if he was at this age? Indeed, Imam al-Reza (A.S.) always confirmed that the Imam after him would be his son, Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (a.s.), and the one who was most qualified. Ibn Qulawaih, on the authority of Kulaini, on the authority of Hussein bin Muhammad, on the authority of Khariani, on the authority of his father, said: "I (i.e. Khayrani's father) was standing in front of Abul-Hassan al-Reza (A.S.), in Khurasan. Someone asked him: 'My master, if something happens, to whom will authority belong?" "To Abu Ja'far (al-Jawad), my son," he replied. The speaker indicated that the age of Abu Ja'far was too young. So, Abul-Hassan al-Reza (A.S.), replied: "Allah, may He be praised, sent Jesus, son of Mary, to be an apostle, a prophet, the bringer of a revealed law (Shari'a), to begin (his mission) when his age was younger than that of Abu Ja'far(al-Jawad), peace be upon him." Narrated Mu'ammar bin Khallad that he heared Imam al-Reza (A.S.), saying: "When he mentioned something and, then, said: 'What need have you for that? Here is Abu Ja'far, whom I have brought into my meetings and whom I have made to be my successor.' Then, he added: 'We are the family of the House (Ahlul-Bayt). Our young inherit from our old, like one feather (on a wing) followed by the next.'" Allamah Majlisi narrated, in his book 'Uyoon Mu'jizat', a description of certain events of that critical period from the age of leadership, and which included the following text:

"... it was pilgrimage season. Some jurisprudents (Fuqaha') of Baghdad and other nations and their religious scholars, numbering 80, went to Medina to perform Hajj ceremonies and, then, they intended to see Abu Ja'far Imam Jawad(A.S.). When they reached the house of Ja'far al-

Sadiq (a.s.), because of its emptiness, entered it and sat on a big carpet. "Then, Abdulla bin Musa (Imam al-Reza's brother) came and sat at the head of the meeting. A caller stood and said: "This is the son of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.), therefore, whoever has any question, he may ask him." He (Abdulla bin Musa i.e. Imam al-Jawad's nephew) was questioned about things, to which he inappropriately answered. His answers caused the Shi'a to be bewildered and grieved, therefore, the jurisprudents were confused among themselves and started leaving the pleace and telling each other that if Abu Ja'far (the Imam) was present, he would have been able to answer all the questions addressed to Abdulla bin Musa.

"Then, a door was opened at the front of the meeting and Muwafaq, the Imam's servant, entered and said: "This is Abu Ja'far Imam Jawad (A.S.)." All those who were present stood up, welcomed and greeted him, then the Imam (A.S.) entered. He (A.S.) sat while all people kept silent. Then, the questioner stood up and asked the Imam (A.S.) different questions, to which he (A.S.) answered perfectly and correctly. His answers caused those present to be happy, give thanks and praise the Imam. They told him: "Indeed, your uncle, Abdulla, gave verdicts so and so." He (A.S.) said: "There is no god but Allah, o my uncle, Abdulla, gave verdicts so and so." He (A.S.) said: "There is no god but Allah, O my uncle! It is great to stand tomorrow (on the resurrection day) before His hands and He will say to you: 'Why did you give verdicts (issue religious decrees) to My servants about things you did not know, while there was someone among people who had more knowledge than you.'"

Even religious scholars and jurisprudents confirmed their declaration for the Imam Jawad's being qualified with the position of leadership. The vivid declaration of Imam al-Reza (A.S.), for his leadership, and the acknowledgement of the famous traditionist, Ali bin Ja'far, are, also, proofs for the Imam's qualification for the position of leadership. He became an Imam at the age of nine. Mamun thought that as all the rulers before him had oppressed the Holy Imams and their schemes had backfired that he would try to bribe the Holy Imams. He tried to make the 8th Imam his heir apparent and give him power and wealth but that also backfired. He now tried to use power and wealth with the 9th Imam again but from a much younger age thinking that he would be able to influence him. His main purpose was also to make sure that the 12th Imam (whom he knew would bring justice to the world) would be from his progeny and therefore intended to give his daughter Ummul Fadl to the Imam for a wife. Mamun still continued oppressing the family and followers of the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.). Mamun called the young Imam (A.S.) to Baghdad from Madina and offered his daughter. This infuriated his family (Banu Abbas). To prove to them the excellence of Imam even at a young age he arranged a meeting between Imam and the most learned of men at that time - Yahya bin

Athkam, the Chief Judje of his period .

Imam (A.S.) read his own Nika (the khutba of which is used today) with the Mehr of 500 dirhams. Imam wrote a letter to Mamun that he would also give Ummul Fadhl Mehr from the wealth of Aakhira. This was in the form of 10 duas which were for fulfilling any hajaat (desires) [Chain of narrators upto Prophet - Jibrail - Allah]* . Thus his title Al-Jawad (the generous one).

* These duas are found in Mafatihul Jinaan (pg 447 - In margin)

Hirze(Amulet) Jawad

Imam lived for a year in Baghdad with Ummul Fadhl. She was very disobedient to Imam. When she found out that Imam had another wife (from the progeny of Ammar-e-Yasir) and that there was also children she was jealous and angry realizing that her father's plan had failed. She complained to her father who also realized that his plan, to keep the 12th Imam in his progeny, had failed.

He was enraged and in his rage he drank heavily and went to the 9th Imam's house and attacked Imam with a sword. Both Ummul Fadhl and a servant saw the attack and believed Imam was dead. Mamun on waking next morning realized the consequences of his attack and was thinking of arranging the disposal of Imam's body when he saw Imam well without a scratch on him. He was confused and asked Imam who showed him an amulet which is called Hirze Jawad.The Holy Imam told him it was from his grand mother Bibi Fatima Zahra (A.S.) and kept the wearer safe from all except the angel of death. We, also, observed how Ma'mun held meetings and councils in which he invited various scholars, thinkers and jurisprudents like the Qadi ul-Qudat(Chief Judge) of the Abbasid state, Yahya bin Aktham for scholarly discussions and debates which lasted hours and days. In such meetings, they introduced the Imam Jawad (A.S..) to critical legislative and theological questions to which he answered wisely and accurately. The debate was attended by top officials of the state, military commanders and leaders.Then, the Qadi, Yahya bin Aktham approached Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (A.S.) and asked him some questions he had prepared before. The Imam Jawad (A.S.) answered them correctly and, in which, he showed the cause for correcteness.

Therefore, the debate went on between Yahya and Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) in the following way: "Ask me whatever you wish," said the Imam in the typical tone of his anscestors. Yahya, then, asked the Holy Imam, "What is your verdict about a man who indulges in hunting while he is in the state of Ihram'. (In the code of religious law hunting is forbidden for a pilgrim).

The Imam at once replied, "Your question is vague and misleading. You should have definitely mentioned whether he hunted within the jurisdiction of the Ka'ba or outside; whether he was

literate or illiterate; whether he was a slave or a free citizen; whether he was a minor or a major; whether it was for the first time or he had done it previously; also, whether that victim was a bird or some other creature; whether the prey was small or big; whether he hunted in the day or at night; whether the hunter repented for his action or persisted in it; whether he hunted secretly of openly; whether the 'Ihram' was for Umra (the lesser pilgrimage) or for Hajj (the greater pilgrimage). Unless all these points are explained no specific answer can be given to this question."

Qadi Yahya was bewildered and staggered in listening to these words, of the Holy Imam, and the entire gathering was dumbfounded. Inability and indecision were clear on Qadi Yahya's face. Thus, the historical period, and what it contains of religious scholars and jurisprudents, acnowledges the leadership of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) in order to continue the right path of his forefathers and their footsteps and, also, bear the religious scholarly and political burdens of divine succession of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

His Knowledge

Indeed, Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) played his role and shared in enriching the scholarly school during the period of his leadership, which lasted nearly 17 years, and, also, safeguarded its patrimony. That period (of the Holy Imam) was distinguished by two things: Dependence on text and narration of the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) and, also, on an accurate understanding and deduction of both the Book (the Qur'an) and Prophet's traditions (Sunnah). In addition to this, the Holy Imam's concern for intellectual knowledge and science, in which, the Imams of Ahlul-Bait and their students participated greatly, in developing, enriching, and expanding its circles to the extent that it became a lofty declaration and a well-fortified fortress for the Islamic thought and Shari'a.

Imam al-Jawad (A.S.), like his forefathers (A.S.), used different means to carry out his scientific procedures, among them are: 1. The means of teaching and instructing thosed students and scholars and urging them to write and record and, also, sustain what comes from the Holy Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.) or by bidding them to the art of writing, publishing, and classifying. Sheikh Tusi in his book 'Rijal', mentioned the number of the close companions of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) and his narrators, who studied and were educated under his care to be about one hundred, including two women. Indeed, all these religious scholars quoted Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) and wrote many books in different fields of Islamic sciences and knowledge. They enriched Islamic schools with true, original researches and thoughts. This fact is proved in the books of 'Rijal' which mentioned the close companions of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) and, in

which, they explained their conditions, their publications and writings.
2. The means of appointing deputies and commanding them to spread out in different parts of the Muslim lands in order to be true callers to Islam, follow it and convey its divine laws. Books of history have recorded the correspondences of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) with his deputies who were spread in different parts of the Muslim world in order to convey Islamic faith and what they learned from the jurisprudence of the Household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and their knowledge. 3. The means of scholarly debates and discussions. The books of traditions and narrations, have recorded for us, richly, discussions and debates in different kinds of sciences and knowledge and defending Islam and fixing its pillars in the fields of monotheism, jurisprudence, interpretation, and narrations and so on.
These discussions contained different researches. Among them were: Defending Islam and countering perverse ideas and deviated philosophies and ideologies whic existed among the Muslims. And, also, repairing the ideological deviations which existed among certain Muslims, such as: Exaggeration and incarnations and others or discussions to explain Islam and clarify its diverse fields.

The Political course in the Holy Imam's Life

The Holy Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.), their followers, and those who supported them during the history of Islam, represented political oppositions against the Umayyad and Abbasid rulers, who usurped the caliphate and imposed their tyrannical rule on the Muslims and who stayed away from the political course, decreed by the Holy Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) for his Ummah. All the political slogans and plans, declared by Ma'mun, aimed to draw the attention of public opinon and those who were loyal to Holy Prophet's Household [Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.)] towards him, and calm down the Shi'ite uprisings. But, inspite of that, the caliph Ma'mun, faced different Shi'ite revolutions because of anti-Islamic deeds. So, this policy did not last for a long time and, soon, the Abbasid rulers turned to hurting and harming the Holy Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.) and hampering them.

The Imam Jawad's Political Role

Studying the historical documents stated by Imam al-Jawad (A.S.), on one hand, and the attitudes held by the Abbasid authorities towards the Holy Imam, on the other, one can understand that Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) was at the top of secret political and ideological essence and who practised his activities in secret and had a leading status with a deep impact on awakening the feelings of the people. Books of traditions, history and narrations recorded

for us some of these letters dispatched by Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (A.S.), to his companions, followers and representatives and which portray vividly the secret political activity of the Holy Imam (A.S.) and his companions and cause us to be acquainted with the ideological and political situation of that age.

These letters reveal not only the existence of the deep relationship between the Holy Imam (A.S.) and his companions and how the financial assistance was presented to him, from different parts of the Muslim lands to cover his needs in performing his activities, but, also, the existence of the Holy Imam's followers, and his sectert cultural and political activity at that time.

Indeed, the Abbasid authorities were watching the Holy Imam's activities and used different ways to hinder it and forbid it against spreading and affecting others. Hence, these letters reveal to us the continuation of this activity and the call in support of the holy family of the Prophet (A.S.), the deepness of their effect, the influence of their ideological and political tendencies, in the life of people, inspite of the terror and dangers which surrounded them.

The Attitude of Abbasid Caliphs towards Imam al-Jawad (A.S.)

Certaily, to study and analyze the attitude of the two Abbasid caliphs, Ma'mun and Mu'tasim, who succeeded the caliphate after him, toward Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (A.S.) indicates, clearly, the importance of the leading personality of the Holy Imam (A.S.) and his esteemed status in the hearts of the people and the inclinations of the Ummah towards him. They considered him (the Holy Imam) as a true representative of Ahlul-Bayt, in that period, and as a successor of his guiding grandfathers (peace be upon them all).

Therefore, we find that Ma'mun summoned the Holy Imam (A.S.) from Madina in the year 211 A.H., and then married him, to his daughter, Ummul Fadl. Because of this marriage, Ma'mun involved himself in a conflict with his cousins, the Abbasid family. Ma'mun wanted to assimilate the situation of Imam al-Jawad (A.S.) towards his collaterals and to contain his public movements in both the ideological and political fields. But, as we have seen, the Holy Imam (A.S.) was opposite of this. He (A.S.) practised his activity accurately and skillfully. The Holy Imam (A.S.) moved in every field in which the opportunity was supplied to him. He (A.S.) refused to stay in Baghdad in order to be far from the siege of the authorities and their control and, then, returned to Madina, his birth place and the residence of his fathers, a centre of knowledge, and faith and a shelter of hearts in order to achieve the related aims as being an .Imam (leader) of the Ummah and a pioneer of the Shari'a