(.Intellectual Accomplishments of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s

One day Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s), then aged nine, was standing with some boys in a lane of Baghdad. Seeing the entourage of Mamun all the others ran away, but as was his habit, Imam (a.s) continued to stand at his place. Mamun came forward and asked him, "Boy! Why did you not run away?" He replied, "O Chief! The passage was not narrow. There was no expectation that you would punish an innocent person. Then why should I run away?" Mamun liked this explanation and he asked the name of this boy and that of his father. He said, "I am Muhammad and Imam Reza (a.s) was my respected father." Mamun was moved by his condition and he spurred his horse forward. At that time he was going for hunting and he had some falcons with him. When he left the habitations he released a falcon to pursue a partridge. The falcon disappeared and returned after sometime carrying a small fish in its beak. Mamun was greatly astounded. On his return he found the boys playing. All ran away except Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s). Mamun approached him and asked, "Tell me, what I hold in my hand?" He replied, "The Almighty Allah has created little fishes in the sea of His power that the falcons of the kings prey upon and inform the sons of the Ahl ul-Bayt of the Prophet."

Debate Of Imam (a.s) With Yahya Bin Aksam

All the Islamic history books mention this debate in detail. This gathering was held on such a magnificent scale that in addition to the nobles of the ruling class, 900 chairs were occupied with scholars and great men of learning and such people as the Arabs were proud of their intellectual accomplishments. Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) who was educated in the divine school could never be afraid of such people.

When the court was filled with the people, Mamun called Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) and had him seated besides him on the royal throne and pillows placed on both his sides. Qadi Yahya bin Aksam was also present in his seat. He said, "If you allow me, can I pose a few questions to this lad?" Mamun said, "Your good manners demand that you seek his own permission." Yahya sought the Imam's leave, which was granted immediately.

Yahya: What is the penalty for the one who hunts in the condition of Ehram.

Imam: (Smiling) This question is absolutely absurd. First tell me, where this person hunted? In the surrounding area or inside the holy sanctuary? Whether he was aware of this matter or ignorant? Whether he did it willingly or by mistake? Whether he was a slave or a freeman? A matured person or a child? Did he do it first time or he had done it before also? Whether the

hunted one was a bird or a quadruped? Small or big? Was the hunter regretful of his action or elated? Was the hunt conducted during the night or in the day? Was he wearing Ehram for Hajj or for Umrah?

Just as the Qadi heard these words he was speechless. The color of his face paled. Darkness appeared below his eyes. He continued to sit shocked. When the silence prolonged, Mamun could not restrain himself. He said to the Imam, "Now that you have told this, please also throw some light on its solution."

Imam: If a person in Ehram hunts in the surrounding area and the prey is a bird, even if it is big, the penalty of the same is a goat. If he hunts a similar prey in the sanctuary, the penalty is two goats. If a young one of a wild animal is hunted in Ehram a ram is to be given as penalty. It should be one that is no more suckled by its mother. If the hunt is that of a deer a goat is to given as penalty and all these penalties apply for hunting wild animals in the surrounding areas. However, if it is done in the sanctuary the penalty would be doubled. And one who gives the penalty has himself to take the animals to the Ka'ba. If this person is wearing Ehram for Hajj he should slaughter these animals in Mina, if he is wearing Ehram for Umrah, he should slaughter then in Mecca. The aware and the ignorant are equally liable. One who does it willingly and knowingly is a sinner. Although in event of ignorance there is no sin. For a freeman the penalty is liable on himself, and the penalty of a slave is obligatory upon his master. There is no penalty on a small child. Penalty is incumbent on a matured person. One who regrets this hunting would be saved from the punishment of the Hereafter. And if he is elated at his deed the punishment of the Hereafter is also there for him.

Hearing the reply the whole gathering was astounded and accolades and congratulations arose from everywhere. Mamun was so happy that he continued to repeat again and again, "Allah best knows where to place His message."

After this Imam (a.s) asked Qazi Yahya, "Now let me ask you a question." Mamun said, "Ask him, indeed."

Imam said, "What do you say regarding this problem? A man looked towards a woman while she was prohibited for him. She became lawful at sunrise, unlawful at noon, again lawful in the afternoon, unlawful at sunset and lawful at night. Again unlawful in the middle of the night and then finally lawful in the morning?

Since Yahya was helpless, the Imam explained, "She was a slave-girl whom he purchased in the morning and she become lawful for him, at the noon time he freed her and she became unlawful for him. In the afternoon he married her. At Sunset he recited the words of Zihar (that she is to him like the back of his mother) and she became unlawful for him. In the night he paid

the penalty and she became lawful for him again. During the night he gave her a revocable divorce and she became unlawful for him and finally he took her back nullifying the divorce in the morning, making her lawful for himself."

Mamun told the people, "Have you seen the level of his knowledge?"

Worship Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

The worship of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) was such that not a moment was without remembrance of Allah. Once he went for the Hajj. Seeing the intensive worship of the Imam, the pilgrims were left bewildered. Mutasim had also come for Hajj at that time. His officials reported to him the account of the worship of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) and his sincerity and humility in prayers. They said, "We have never seen a more pious person." The Imam used to weep the whole night in Allah's remembrance and when people restrained him he intensified his lamentations and said, "When have I worshipped the Almighty as befits Him, that you ask me to reduce it?"

A significant proof of his excessive worship is that his wife Ummul Fadl the daughter of Caliph Mamun wrote in a complain letter to her father: You have married me to a person who spends the whole night standing in the prayer niche, and fasts during the day. Neither is he fond of beauty and embellishments nor there is any means of comfort and luxury in his house. Daughters of the kings cannot spend their life with such ascetics.

Valour Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

During the time Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) resided in Baghdad at the behest of Mamun and Mamun was making efforts to give his daughter Ummul Fadl in marriage to him, the Abbasids were severely opposed to him. Once, Imam (a.s) delivered some admonitions in the mosque of Baghdad, mentioning the atrocities committed by Bani Umayyah and Bani Abbas on the Sadats. Hearing these things the Abbaside got infuriated and were ready to kill him. Someone reported this matter to Imam (a.s). He said, "Go and tell them that I am not at all afraid of those things. Can they terrorize me to restrain my tongue from expressing truth? We Ahl ul-Bayt are never afraid of such things." When Mamun learnt about this intention of the Abbasides he strictly restrained them from it.

Piety Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

In spite of the fact that he was the son-in-law of an influential and wealthy ruler like Mamun, he had no regard for this relationship. He lived a very simple life, as was the way of his

ancestors. And he remained in this way as long as he lived. All the luxurious items that his wife Umme Fadl had brought from her father's were kept in a separate building, and the Imam told her, "If you like to spend a life of luxury stay in that house and if you want to spend a life of poverty stay with me in this house." Ummul Fadl chose to stay with him and tGenerosity Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

The door of the Holy Imam was always open to deliver benevolence. Like his Holy ancestors, Imam had a very generous heart. Many eligible poor people of Medina used to get a stipend from the Imam. No applicant went dejected from his door. For the people in need in other places, the Imam used to dispatch funds to his representatives. The deprived ones of Medina in addition to monetary help also received free meals but all this charity was performed in such a secret way that no one knew who was behind it. On most of the nights the Imam himself roamed the streets and by-lanes of Medina carrying victuals for the poor. Whenever he found a needy one he gave him from behind a door or a wall or covered his own face.

Patience Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

The officers of the Abbaside dynasty were highly jealous of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) specially when he became the son-in-law of Mamun Rashid. The nobles of the Abbaside clan did not like that Ummul Fadl be married to Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) because they had intense enmity to the family of the Holy Prophet (S), but they failed to change the decision of Mamun. This failure made their opposition more severe. Now they began to poison the ears of Ummul Fadl and said to her in a taunting way: Your father has done a great injustice upon you. He has married you to a poor and destitution-loving man. You should have been given in marriage to a prince or a son of an officer. Ummul Fadl was herself of a haughty nature while these people instigated her day and night. The result was that from the first day of marriage she began to oppose the Imam. And then she gave so much trouble to the Imam that cannot be fully related. However, the Imam observed patience and self-control. Some of his relatives also used to trouble the Imam but he never opted for any retaliatory tactics.

Humility Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

The narrator says that when he learnt that the Imam was married to Ummul Fadl, "I went to congratulate him. Keeping in mind the prevailing way of life I was thinking that the Imam might not allow me audience. But I was wrong. As soon as the Imam received the news of my arrival he called me at once. I saw that there was not a slightest change in his past and present condition. He had the same good manners, same cordiality, same humility, meekness and the

same affection and regard. I was feeling thirsty but I controlled it and did not choose to ask the Imam for water. But the Imam realized it and he ordered his slave to get water for me. There was some delay in this, therefore the Imam himself arose and brought water for me. I said, 'Why did your highness take the trouble?' He replied, 'This is a rewardable deed. Do you want to restrain me from it?'"

Forbearance Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) was absolutely forbearing and magnanimous. His wife Ummul Fadl, the daughter of Mamun Rashid, always spoke with him in a taunting and caustic way, but the Imam observed forbearance. One day she behaved like this in the presence of Mamun. Mamun scolded his daughter and said, "I do not like your audacious behavior with such a forbearing husband."

Forgiveness Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

Not to mention the strangers, there were some relatives of Imam Reza (a.s) who opposed him. Initially this opposition remained dormant because the Imam did not have any child and they used to consider themselves as his inheritors but when Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) were born all their hopes were dashed. Now they resorted to open opposition and began to allege: Since Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) is not of the same complexion, he is not the son of Imam Reza (a.s). Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) was all the time hearing such taunting remarks. One day some Khums money arrived and the Imam called his near and dear ones and distributed the amount. Among them was also the fellow most inimical to the Imam. The Imam also gave him his share. People were surprised at this. The Imam said, "He has spoken some false things or is still involved in it; and Allah would punish him for it. His revenge would be much more than my revenge. I am just fulfilling my duty." When the fellow learnt about it, he was much ashamed. Throwing himself at the feet of the Imam he said, "Forgive my mistake." The Imam said, "Go, I have forgiven you. May Allah also forgive you."

Affection Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

During the eight years of his stay in Baghdad, Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) regularly imparted religious education to the people. On most of the days people remained in his presence from morning till night. He was neither fed up with them nor worried. One day he was having high temperature, when he was informed of some people waiting for him outside to narrate their problems. The family members of the Imam said that it was not the time to meet Imam (a.s)

and they would tell the people to come sometime later. The Imam said, "No, maybe someone is having an urgent need to meet me." So he came out with the support of a slave and in that same high fever listened to the people. One of them said, "My father is on the death bed. He wanted to make some bequest regarding his property in your presence and also to see you for the last time. But how can I request you to come while you are in such a severe fever?" The Imam said, "I will come." His family protested how he could go out in such a condition but the Imam said that he would walk slowly. Thus he went keeping his hands on the shoulders of two slaves, one on each side. Allaho Akbar! (God is Greatest)! Except for the Ahl ul-Bayt who else can display such affection?

Hospitality Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) was also very hospitable. Once a guest arrived at his place in the middle of the night. The Imam asked him if he would like to have dinner. The guest said, "O son of Allah's Messenger, though I am hungry, since it is such an odd hour I don't want to inconvenience you, I will sleep hungry." The Imam said, "Guests do no sleep hungry at our place." Saying so he went inside and awakened one of his slave-maids and told her, "I am igniting the oven, you knead the flour." She said, "Son of Allah's Messenger, I will ignite it myself." "No", said the Imam, "I also want to take some part in serving the guest." Thus the Imam got the food prepared and brought it to the guest himself. Seeing such affection the man began to weep. When he asked the reason he said, "I am crying at the thought that how the world has not recognized such godly people."

Imam Muhammad Taqi's (a.s) Kindness To Relatives

Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) used to behave very nicely and affectionately with all the people of his clan. Among them were also those who did not accept him as the son of Imam Reza (a.s). Imam (a.s) used to bear all the false allegations patiently, but he never broke off relations with them. He used to share their sorrows and hardships regularly and also fulfilled their needs.

Imam Muhammad Taqi's (a.s) Kind Behavior To Slaves

Ummul Fadl the daughter of Mamun had brought some slave girls with her and she used to be very harsh with them and beat them with canes. Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) used to stop her from such harshness and said, "They are Allah's creatures. If you are not merciful on them, Allah would not be merciful on you." The words of the Imam had no effect on Ummul Fadl. One day she beat a slave girl in such a bad way that she began to bleed. When the Imam came

home and saw her condition he rebuked Ummul Fadl. She was so angry at this, that she went to her father's home. The Imam began to treat and serve the slave girl. He himself washed her wounds and applied ointment. He nursed the slave girl for almost a fortnight till she recovered. Then the Imam said to her, "Now you go to Ummul Fadl." She said, "I prefer to be killed than see the face of such a heartless mistress."

Contentment Of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s)

Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s) used to lead a very simple and austere life. His dress used to be of very ordinary fabric. One day someone told him that since he sat besides the king it did not befit him to wear such simple clothes. The Imam said, "If my value had been due to my clothes it would have befitted me to wear expensive clothes. But when it is not so, why should I give up simplicity? My present dress is concealing my body and it is also comfortable. Then why should I give it up for a fashionable one? We Ahl ul-Bayt are content on whatever we get and we do not allow greed to approach us."