252809 - Imam Ja‘far as-Saadiq

the question

Can you please provide a brief biography Jafar bin Mohammad bin ‘Ali bin Zain al-'Abdeen bin Al-Hussain bin 'Ali also known as jafar al sadiq and can you please mention some reliable biographical books in which we can read his biography.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

His full name is Imam Abu ‘Abdullah Ja‘far as-Saadiq ibn Muhammad al-Baaqir ibn ‘Ali Zayn al-‘Aabideen ibn al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him and be pleased with them).

His mother was Umm Farwah bint al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr at-Taymi. Her mother was Asmaa’ bint ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Abi Bakr. So his mother was descended from Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq on her mother’s side and also on her father’s side.

Hence he used to say: Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq was my ancestor twice over.

He was born in 80 AH, and met some of the Sahaabah. Adh-Dhahabi said: I think he met Anas ibn Maalik and Sahl ibn Sa‘d.

See: Siyar A‘laam an-Nubala’ (6/255-270).

Secondly:

His shaykhs and students:

He narrated from his father, Abu Ja‘far al-Baaqir, and from ‘Ubaydullah ibn Abi Raafi‘, ‘Urwah ibn

az-Zubayr, ‘Ata’ ibn Abi Rabaah – and his reports from him are narrated in Muslim, his grandfather al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Naafi‘ al-‘Umari, Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir, az-Zuhri, Muslim ibn Abi Maryam, and others. He did not narrate a great deal, except from his father; they were both among the scholars of Madinah.

The following narrated from him: his son Moosa al-Kaazim, Yahya ibn Sa‘eed al-Ansaari, Yazeed ibn ‘Abdullah ibn al-Haadi – they (Yahya and Yazeed) were both older than him –, Abaan ibn Taghlib, Ibn Jurayj, Mu‘aawiyah ibn ‘Ammaar ad-Duhni, Ibn Ishaaq – among a group of his peers – , Sufyaan, Shu‘bah, Maalik, Ismaa‘eel ibn Ja‘far, Wahb ibn Khaalid, Haatim ibn Ismaa‘eel, Sulaymaan ibn Bilaal, Sufyaan ibn ‘Uyaynah, al-Hasan ibn Saalih, al-Hasan ibn ‘Ayyaash – the brother of Abu Bakr, Zuhayr ibn Muhammad, Hafs ibn Ghiyaath, Zayd ibn Hasan al-Anmaati, Sa‘eed ibn Sufyaan al-Aslami, ‘Abdullah ibn Maymoon, ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn ‘Imraan az-Zuhri, ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ad-Daraawardi, ‘Abd al-Wahhaab ath-Thaqafi, ‘Uthmaan ibn Farqad, Muhammad ibn Thaabit al-Bunaani, Muhammad ibn Maymoon az-Za‘faraani, Muslim az-Zanji, Yahya al-Qattaan, Abu ‘Aasim an-Nabeel, and others. See: as-Siyar.

Thirdly:

His status in terms of knowledge, virtue and adherence to the Sunnah, and his disavowal of the Raafidis and other extremists, and the seriousness of their fabrications against him:

Abu Ahmad ibn ‘Adiyy said: He narrated many hadiths from his father, from Jaabir and from his forefathers. The leading scholars narrated from him. And he was one of the trustworthy people, as Ibn Ma‘een said.

It was narrated that ‘Amr ibn Abi’l-Miqdaam said: When I looked at Ja‘far ibn Muhammad, I realised that he was descended from Prophets. I saw him standing at the Jamrah, saying: Ask me, ask me.

‘Ali ibn al-Ja‘d narrated that Zuhayr ibn Mu‘aawiyah said: My father said to Ja‘far ibn Muhammad: I have a neighbour who claims that you disavowed Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. Ja‘far said: May Allah disavow your neighbour. By Allah, I hope that Allah will benefit me through my ties of blood with Abu Bakr, for I fell ill one time and I left my will with my maternal uncle ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn al-

Qaasim (which means that he was very close to him).

Ibn ‘Uyaynah said: They narrated to me from Ja‘far ibn Muhammad – although I did not hear it (directly) from him – that he said: At the time of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), the family of Abu Bakr were called the family of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

Muhammad ibn Fudayl said, narrating from Saalim ibn Abi Hafsah, that he said: I asked Abu Ja‘far and his son Ja‘far about Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. He said: O Saalim, regard them as allies and disavow anyone who regards them as enemies, for they are both imams of guidance.

Then Ja‘far said: O Saalim, would a man revile his grandfather? Abu Bakr is my grandfather, and I will not attain the intercession of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) on the Day of Resurrection if I do not regard them both (Abu Bakr and ‘Umar) as allies and disavow those who regard them as enemies.

Adh-Dhahabi said: These words were narrated via mutawaatir reports from Ja‘far as-Saadiq. I bear witness by Allah that he was sincere in his words, and was not being hypocritical towards anyone or trying to appease anyone. May Allah doom the Raafidis.

Adh-Dhahabi commented on the above report by saying:

Saalim had an obvious inclination towards Shi‘ism, yet despite that he transmitted these true words. It is only people of virtue who recognise the virtue of people of virtue. Similarly the one who narrated it, Ibn Fudayl, was also a Shi‘i but trustworthy in narrating hadith. May Allah doom the Shi‘ah of our times; how deeply they are immersed in ignorance and lies! They impugn the two shaykhs (Abu Bakr and ‘Umar), the two close companions of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and interpret these words of al-Baaqir and as-Saadiq as having been said by way of taqiyyah (dissimulation).

End quote from Siyar A‘laam an-Nubala’, 4/402

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

As for telling lies about Ja‘far and what they narrate from him of what he (allegedly) said in private (impugning Abu Bakr and ‘Umar), it is among the gravest of lies, to the extent that it is said that no one was lied about as Ja‘far (may Allah be pleased with him) was lied about.

End quote from Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa, 4/78.

He also said:

The Raafidis are the most ignorant of sects, the most mendacious and the furthest removed from knowledge of religious texts and reason. They regard taqiyyah (dissimulation) as one of the fundamental principles of their religion, and they tell many lies about Ahl al-Bayt, the extent of which no one knows except Allah. They even narrate from Ja‘far as-Saadiq that he said: “Taqiyyah is my religion and the religion of my forefathers”!

Taqiyyah is the symbol of hypocrisy, because in reality it means that they say something that is not in their hearts, and this is the very essence of hypocrisy. Therefore because this is one of the fundamental principles of their religion, whatever they transmit from ‘Ali or anyone else of Ahl al-Bayt that is in harmony with the teachings of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah, they describe it as having been said by way of taqiyyah. Thus they opened wide the doors of hypocrisy to the baatini Qaraamitah [an extreme esoteric sect].

End quote from Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa (13/263).

He also said:

The problem is with those who lied about Ja‘far, not with Ja‘far himself… to the extent that everyone who wanted to make his lies acceptable to people attributed them to Ja‘far.

End quote from Minhaaj as-Sunnah (4/54).

Imam Ja‘far as-Saadiq’s disavowal of the Raafidis and their ilk is too well known to need a list of all the reports, and their fabrications against him are too many to be counted.

A quick glance at the names of his shaykhs, such as ‘Ata’ ibn Abi Rabaah, az-Zuhri, ‘Urwah ibn az-

Zubayr, al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad and others, and a quick glance at the names of his students who narrated from him, such as Abu Haneefah, Sufyaan ath-Thawri, Ibn ‘Uyaynah, and Maalik, and the high esteem in which they held him and the pride they felt in being his students, will expose the lies of the baatinis (esoteric sects) concerning him. How come his shaykhs from whom he acquired knowledge and his students who learned from him, were the prominent figures among Ahl as-Sunnah in his era, then he became the imam of their enemies among the Raafidis and their ilk?

This is not the case of Ahl as-Sunnah vis-à-vis the Raafidis concerning as-Saadiq only; rather it is also the case with regard to his son and his forefathers.

See the answer to question no. 101272.

Fourthly:

As for books that give the biography of Ja‘far as-Saadiq, there is hardly any book of biography (seerah) and prominent figures (a‘laam) that does not mention his biography, such as Siyar al-A‘laam by adh-Dhahabi, al-Bidaayah wa’n-Nihaayah by Ibn Katheer, Wafiyyaat al-A‘yaan by Ibn Khallikaan, and others.

There are also books that deal exclusively with his biography, such as al-Imam as-Saadiq: Hayaatuhu wa ‘Asruhu wa Aaraa’uhu wa Fiqhuhu by Shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahrah.

There is a brief essay entitled al-Imam Ja‘far as-Saadiq by Shaykh Saalih ad-Darweesh, at the end of which he mentions some other writings that give his biography, including the following:

· al-Imam Ja‘far as-Saadiq wa Aaraa’uhu f’il-Imaamah: Diraasah Naqdiyyah lima nasabahu ilayhi ash-Shi‘ah min al-Abaateel by Muhammad Mahfooz Abu ‘Akkaaz, Master’s thesis in Sharee‘ah and Usool ad-Deen at Umm al-Qura University in Makkah.

· Marwiyaat al-Imam Ja‘far as-Saadiq fi’s-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah wa Ahwaal ar-Ruwwaat ‘anhu wa Namaadhij mimma nusiba ilayhi by Lateefah Ibraaheem al-Haadi, PhD thesis in Sharee‘ah and Usool ad-Deen at Umm al-Qura University in Makkah.

And Allah knows best.