

**Personality of Ja‘far Son of Abū Ṭālib (as)
in the Islamic Reliable Sources**

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(Received: June 29, 2024, Accepted: August 19, 2024)

Abstract

This article embarks on an exhaustive exploration of the life and profound significance of Ja‘far b. Abī Ṭālib, an often overlooked yet pivotal figure in the annals of early Islamic history. Ja‘far's familial ties as the cousin of the revered Messenger of Allah (s) and the brother of the esteemed Imam, Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, ‘Alī (a), underscore the gravity of his role within the nascent Muslim community. Given the dearth of independent scholarly works dedicated to his life, this study endeavors to bridge this gap by meticulously scouring through a plethora of library resources and historical texts authored by Muslim historians, encompassing both Sunni and Shiite perspectives. Through a meticulous and comprehensive analysis, this article aims to illuminate various facets of Ja‘far's persona. Not only does it delve into his character and personal traits, but it also explores his familial relationships, including his offspring, shedding light on his familial legacy within the early Muslim society. Moreover, the study delves into Ja‘far's contributions to the community affairs, elucidating his impact on the socio-political landscape of the time. By drawing from an extensive array of historical sources, the research endeavors to present an accurate portrayal of Ja‘far b. Abī Ṭālib, transcending the limitations of biased narratives and myths that may have clouded his legacy over time. By shining a spotlight on lesser-known figures like Ja‘far, the study not only enriches our understanding of early Islamic history but also underscores the multifaceted nature of the personalities that shaped the trajectory of the faith during its formative years.

Keywords: Ja‘far b. Abī Ṭālib, Prophet's cousin, Imam ‘Alī's brother, Possessor of Two Wings (Dhū al-Janaḥayn), Leader of the Community, Ṣalāt Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār.

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Statement of the issue

History has wronged the Messenger, his family, and his companions and has not given them their due, including our master Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon him. Based on this principle and in connection with the Messenger of God and the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon them, God has enabled us to write some lines about his biography, peace be upon him. We ask God Almighty to accept this little from us.

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, the First before the creation and the Last after the annihilation of things, the All-Knowing who is not forgotten by those who remember Him, nor diminished in gratitude by those who thank Him, nor disappointed by those who supplicate to Him, nor does He cut off hope for those who hope in Him. The best of prayers and the most complete salutations upon the beloved of the Lord of the Worlds, the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, the leader of all creation from the best of Adam's descendants to the Day of Judgment, concerning whom the Lord of the Worlds said, "And indeed, you are of a great moral character." He is the judge of judges and the teacher of callers, His Prophet and beloved, Moḥammad al-Mustafā, and peace and benedictions of Allah be upon his pure, immaculate, and chosen family, the arks of salvation, and the banners of guidance, peace be upon them abundantly.

The early years of Islam witnessed the rise of numerous remarkable individuals who shaped the course of a nascent religion. Among them, Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib stands out as a figure of immense significance, yet his life and contributions often remain veiled in relative obscurity. This article, titled "Studies on Early Islamic History with Emphasis on the Personality of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib (a)," aims to rectify this gap in scholarship by offering a comprehensive exploration of his life and legacy.

Ja'far's importance lies not only in his familial ties as the cousin of Prophet Moḥammad (pbuh) and brother of Imam 'Alī (a), but also in his own right as a prominent and renowned figure in the early Islamic community. Despite his undeniable contributions, a dearth of dedicated studies exists, leaving many aspects of his life, deeds, and impact on Islam shrouded in ambiguity.

This article is driven by the need to illuminate the life of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib. Unlike other well-documented figures of the era, Ja'far's story

remains largely untold. This lacuna in knowledge compels a closer examination, prompting inquiries into his experiences, decisions, and unwavering dedication to the fledgling Muslim community.

Through meticulous research, this article aspires to answer these questions and dispel the ambiguities surrounding Ja'far. By delving into historical accounts and drawing upon the works of both Sunni and Shia scholars, this study aims to shed light on Ja'far's remarkable journey, ensuring his rightful place within the narrative of early Islamic history.

I ardently hope that this article not only fills a void in scholarly literature but also sparks the interest of readers curious about the foundational figures of Islam. Through this humble work, I aim to make Ja'far b. Abī Tālib's life and legacy accessible, fostering a richer understanding of this pivotal period in Islamic history.

Statement of the issue

A question arises: What are the reasons that prompted us to write about Ja'far b. Abī Tālib (peace be upon him)?

Writing about Ja'far ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) is a topic that generates much interest, especially in light of the injustice done to him and the disregard for his rightful place in early Islamic history. This great man, one of the prominent figures of Islam, has not been given the recognition he deserves in many historical sources. There are several reasons why writing about him is important:

- 1. Historical Injustice:** As you mentioned, his role has often been minimized or ignored in many historical texts, and his life and virtues have not been portrayed in a manner befitting his status.
- 2. His High Rank in Islam:** Ja'far ibn Abi Talib was one of the most significant and admired personalities, known for his sacrifice and devotion. His life serves as a model of loyalty and selflessness in the cause of Allah.
- 3. His Virtues and Miracles:** Ja'far's virtues and miracles have not been sufficiently highlighted in most sources. The omission of these aspects affects how later generations understand this great personality in Islam.
- 4. Difficulty in Accessing Information:** Often, the sources that mention him are brief, making it difficult for researchers and interested individuals to gather a complete and accurate picture of his life. This difficulty in obtaining detailed information requires searching through multiple sources to piece together what can be found.

5. The Need to Present His Biography Again: Writing about him can help present a more complete and accurate account of Sayyidina Ja'far ibn Abi Talib's life, contributing to the correction of historical understanding for the current generation. Reviving the biography of such figures is akin to reviving a part of Islamic history that deserves to be remembered and studied in full detail.

His Birth

It is widely held that Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him) was born twenty years before the prophetic mission. He belonged to the Quraysh tribe of Banu Hashim and was the third son of Abū Ṭālib (peace be upon him), coming after Ṭālib and 'Aqīl in birth order. His younger brother was Imam Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (peace be upon him) was younger than him by ten years.

His full name was Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib b. Abd al-Muttalib, the cousin of the Great Prophet Moḥammad (pbuh) and one of the noble and senior companions of the Prophet. He was the brother of the valiant Imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him), the leader of the valiant warriors.

His Titles

Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib was bestowed with the title "Dhū al-Jinahayn" (The One with Two Wings) due to the belief that he was granted wings in Paradise as a reward for his bravery and martyrdom in the Battle of Mu'tah. The title "al-Ṭayyār" (The Flying One) is also associated with Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, further emphasizing the belief that he was granted wings in Paradise. That was his arms were cut off in battle, and Allah gave him wings to fly with in Paradise. The Prophet Moḥammad (pbuh) said when his arms were cut off in the Battle of Mu'tah and he took the flag with his arms: "Indeed, Allah has replaced for him from his hands with two wings with which he flies in Paradise wherever he wishes." (Al-Mamaqani, vol.1-2, p. 212. 1749) So, he was named "al-Ṭayyār." (Al-Sam'ani, vol. 4, p.91) He fought until both his arms were cut off, and the Prophet Moḥammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: "I saw Ja'far flying in Paradise (The title "Al-Ṭayyār" (The Flyer) encapsulates the essence of Ja'far b. Abī Talib's character and his remarkable reward in Paradise. It symbolizes his swiftness and agility, both on the battlefield and in his pursuit of righteousness. It also signifies his ascension to a higher plane of existence, where he flies with the angels, forever remembered for his bravery and

unwavering faith). with the angels." (Al-Suyuti, vol. 2, p. 5; Al-Mufid, vol. 57; Al-Mufid, vol. 270; 'S. Alī al-Ashraf, Al Ja'far b. Abī Talib).

His Father:

First: His Eminence, Abū Ṭālib (peace be upon him)

Abū Ṭālib was son of Abdul Muttalib b. Hashim b. Abd Manaf, from the nobles of Mecca and the leaders of the Quraysh tribe in general, and the Hashim clan in particular. He adhered to the Abrahamic religion. He briefly held the position of providing water for the pilgrims before the prophetic mission. After the death of his father, Abdul Muttalib, he took the responsibility of caring for the Prophet Moḥammad (peace be upon him and his family), fostering him when he was young and protecting him when he was older, shielding him from the polytheists of the Quraysh.

His Mother

Fatima bint Asad, the daughter of Asad b. Hashim b. Abd Manaf, was a woman of exceptional virtue and nobility. She was the mother of Ṭālib, 'Aqīl, Ja'far, and the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him), and her daughters: Jumānah and Fākhtah (Umm Hānī). Her life was marked by piety, strength, and unwavering devotion to faith.

His Brothers:

First: 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (a):

Second: 'Aqīl, may Allah be pleased with him:

Third: Ṭālib

His Sisters:

Ṭālib b. Abī Ṭālib, the eldest brother of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, is said to have had four sisters:

1. **Umm Hānī bint Abī Ṭālib:** Also known as Fakhtah, she was the eldest of Ṭālib's sisters.
2. **Jumānah bint Abī Ṭālib:** She was the Prophet's cousin and sister of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. She converted to Islam and migrated to Medina where she continued to live until she died there. It has been narrated that the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) recited *talqīn* on her body. (Ibn 'Asākir, vol. 42, p. 8,1415, *Nasab Quraysh*, vol.40).
3. **Zayṭah:** She married Mughirah b. Shubbah al-Thaqafi, a pre-Islamic poet who later converted to Islam.



4. **Asma bint Abī Ṭālib:** Some sources mention Asma bint Abī Ṭālib as another sister of Ṭālib. However, her existence is less certain compared to the other three.

While there is general agreement on the existence of Umm Hani, Jumanah, and Zaytah as Ṭālib's sisters, the existence of Asma bint Abī Ṭālib remains a subject of debate among historians.

His Wife

The pure and chaste woman, Asma bint Umays, who emigrated twice, and prayed towards the Qiblas (directions of prayer). Asma bint Umays al-Khath'amiyya, known as the Abyssinian (Ethiopian) from Banu Khatha'am, was a noble and dignified woman. Ja'far al-Ṭayyār married her, and after him, Abū Bakr succeeded him in marriage to her. Then, she married 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib after the death of Abū Bakr, and she bore for him Yahya b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib who passed away during his father's lifetime and did not leave descendants. (Ibn al-Athīr, 1474.) It is also said that his name was 'Awn. (Abū Na'im, vol. 2, p. 74).

Among the companions of the Prophet Moḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, is Asmā bint 'Umays. (Al-Ṭūsī, p. 34; Al-Tafrishī, p. 412).

It is narrated from Kuraib (the freedman of 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās) from 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās, who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said, 'The four sisters, namely Maymuna, Umm al-Faḍl, Salmā, and Asmā bint Umays, and their maternal sister, are believers.'" (Ibn 'Asākir, vol. 3, p. 125; al-Hindī, vol. 12, p.13). Asmā was among the early and foremost believers, (Bayhaqī, vol. 2, p. 174; al-Dhahabī, vol. 3, p. 325), and she was among the first thousand emigrants in Islam. (Al-Ṭabarī, vol. 1, p. 266; Ibn Sa'd, vol. 1-3 p. 214; 8; 208; *Al-Nubalā'*, vol. 3, p. 525).

Ja'far al-Ṭayyār's Children

Ibn 'Anba and al-'Alawī in "al-Majdī" and al-A'rajī in "Al-Manāhil," have said that Ja'far al-Ṭayyār had eight children, and their names are as follows: Abdullah, Awn, Moḥammad the Elder, Moḥammad the Younger, Ḥamīd, Husayn, Abdullah the Elder, and Abdullah the Younger. The mother of all of them, is Asmā' bint 'Umays al-Khath'amiyya. Moḥammad the Elder was martyred in the Battle of Ṣiffīn, and 'Awn and Moḥammad the Younger were martyred in the Battle of Karbala. (Ibn Ambah, vol. 35 and

36; Al Tabersi, vol. 1, Ḥāshiyah, p. 125; Al Hour Al Aamili, vol. 4, p. 119; al-A' lām min al-Ṣaḥāba wa al-Tābi'īn p. 36; al-Majdī, p. 296; al-A'rajī, p. 50).

First: Ja'far in the Qur'an and Narrations: Some Verses Revealed Concerning Him.

It is narrated from Abū al-Jārūd, from Abū Ja'far (peace be upon him) : Regarding His saying, **“Of the believers are men who have been true to what they pledged to Allah.”** [مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ] That is, they would never flee, **“Some of them have fulfilled their promise, and some are still waiting,”** [فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ] i.e. their appointed time, and they are Ḥamza and Ja'far b. Abī Tālib, **“And some are waiting”** [وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْتَظِرُ] their appointed time, meaning 'Alī (peace be upon him), Allah says, **“And they did not change their pledge.”** (Qur'an 33:23) **وَمَا يَبْدُلُوا تَبْدِيلًا**.

Regarding what was revealed from the Qur'an specifically concerning the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, and 'Alī and his household, peace be upon them, apart from the people, from Surah al-Baqarah: **“And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds...”** [وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ....] - the verse was revealed concerning 'Alī, Ḥamza, Ja'far, and 'Ubaydah b. al-Hārith b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. (*Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*, p. 53).

And it has been narrated on the authority of Abū Ja'far (peace be upon him):

Regarding the saying of Allah, **“Those who have been evicted from their homes without right - only because they say, “Our Lord is Allah”** (Qur'an 22:4), [الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ] he said: "It was revealed concerning the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, and 'Alī, Ḥamza, Ja'far, and it applies to al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them all." (Al Kouleini, vol. 8, p. 338).

Second: Ja'far b. al-Ṭayyār in the Noble Traditions:

1. Ja'far is among the leaders of the people of Paradise: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: "We, the sons of Abdul-Muttalib, are the chiefs of the people of Paradise: I, Ḥamza, 'Alī, Ja'far, Hasan, Hussein, and the Mahdi." (Ibn Majah, vol. 2, p. 1368; Mustadrak al-Hakim, vol. 3, p. 211; Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq's, p.562).

2. Allah Almighty praises Ja'far for four qualities in him: Imam al-Bāqir (peace be upon him) said: "Allah Almighty revealed to His Messenger: 'I have praised Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib for four qualities.' So, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) called him and informed him. Ja'far said, 'Had Allah not informed you, I would not have informed you. I have never drunk wine because I knew that if I did, my intellect would be lost. I have never lied because lying diminishes nobility. I have never committed adultery because I feared that if I did, it would be done to me. And I have never worshipped idols because I knew that they neither harm nor benefit.' Then the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) struck his hand on Ja'far's shoulder and said: 'It is the right of Allah Almighty to give him wings with which he will fly in Paradise.'" (al-Fattāl al-Nayshabūrī, p. 269; al-Ṣadūq, vol. 4, p. 133; 'Ilal al-Sharāy', vol. 2, p. 668).

3. Ja'far is among the best of martyrs: Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (peace be upon him) said, "The best of martyrs are Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, the one with the dyed wings." (Qādī al-Nu'mānī al-Maghribī, vol. 1, p. 124).

4. Ja'far resembles the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family): The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) said: "O Ja'far, you resemble my character and my appearance, and you are from the same tree as I am." (Mohammad b. Sulayman al-Kufī, vol. 1, p. 497; *Musnad of Ahmad*, vol. 4, p. 342; *al-Bukhuri*, vol. 3, p. 168; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 5, p. 320).

5. Ja'far was the intimate of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). (In other words, Ja'far had a very close and personal relationship with the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). Being an intimate of the Messenger of Allah implies that Ja'far was not only close to him physically but also emotionally and spiritually. He was someone whom the Prophet trusted deeply and with whom he shared personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences. This closeness indicates a strong bond of friendship, trust, and mutual respect between Ja'far and the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh).

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) said: "When the Prophet's death approached, Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib and Zayd b. Ḥarīthah passed away, he used to weep excessively for them when he entered his house, saying, 'They both used to console me and keep me company.'" (Ṣadūq, vol. 1, p. 177) *Ja'far's Stations and Distinguishing Characteristics*. (Al-Ashraf: "The Family of Ja'far")

Ja'far's Stations and Distinguishing Characteristics

First: His Stations (*Maqāmāt*)

1. His Faith

He never associated partners with Allah even for the blink of an eye; thus, he remained steadfast upon the religion of his noble forefathers, and condemned the worship of idols. (Balādhurī, vol. 2, p. 295).

It is narrated in a reliable tradition from Imam Abū Ja'far al-Bāqir (peace be upon him) that he said: Allah, the Most High, revealed to His Messenger, "I have praised Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib for four qualities," so the Prophet (pbuh) summoned him and informed him. Ja'far replied, "Had Allah not informed you, I would not have revealed these to you:

1. I have never consumed alcohol, for I know that it clouds the mind.
 2. I have never lied, for lying diminishes integrity.
 3. I have never committed adultery, for I fear the consequences.
 4. I have never worshiped idols, for I know they neither harm nor benefit."
- The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) then struck Ja'far's shoulder and said, "It is the right of Allah, the Almighty, to grant you wings with which you will fly alongside the angels in Paradise." (Al-Ṣadūq, vol. 4, p. 397, h:5847; Al-Ṣadūq, p. 75; Al-majlis, p. 17; Al-Ṣadūq, vol. 2, p. 558; Also, p:348; Al-Majlisī, vol. 22, p. 273, h:16).

It is also narrated that Abū Ṭālib once saw the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and 'Alī (peace be upon him) praying, with Ja'far (peace be upon him) on the right side of 'Alī. He said to Ja'far, *Pray next to your cousin and pray to his left.* (Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 1, p. 386; al-Mamaqānī, vol. 1-2, p. 212), Ja'far was the first to pray after the Prophet and 'Alī (peace be upon them), as mentioned in the *Amālī* of al-Ṣadūq: Imam al-Sadiq, Ja'far b. Moḥammad (peace be upon him), said, "The first congregation was when the Prophet (pbuh) prayed and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was with him. Abū Ṭālib passed by with Ja'far, so, he told him, 'My son, pray next to your cousin.' When the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, felt their presence, he preceded them.



2. Resembling the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)

He who resembled the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, in his appearance and character... And it suffices to know of his beauty, dignity, radiance, behavior, praiseworthy qualities, and his elevation above all worldly matters.

It is narrated in a reliable chain from the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: *"As for you, O Ja'far, you have resembled my appearance and character, and you are my progeny."* (Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 1, p. 378; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, vol. 1, p. 212).

And the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: *"Ja'far resembled me in my appearance and character."* (Al-Balādhārī:2/295-298, 299), And indeed, Ja'far was the most resembling of people, both in appearance and character, to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family. (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, vol. 1, p. 211; al-Amīn, vol. 4, p. 118; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 1, p. 386; al-Māmaqānī, vol. 1-2, p. 212).

3. A Branch of the Tree from which the Messenger of Allah Was Created

Ja'far is a branch of the tree from which the Messenger of Allah and the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī, peace be upon them, were created, as narrated by al-Ṣadūq from Imam Moḥammad al-Bāqir, peace be upon him, who said: *"The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: 'People were created from various trees, and I and the son of Abū Ṭālib were created from one tree. My trunk is 'Alī and my branch is Ja'far (as)'"* (Ṣadūq, vol. 1, p. 24-25, No. 72; al-Māmaqānī, vol. 12, p. 212).

Ibn 'Abbās said: *"The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, once went out while holding the hand of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, and said: 'O people of the Ansar, O people of Banū Hāshim, O people of Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib! I am Moḥammad, I am the Messenger of Allah. Indeed, I was created from a blessed clay from four members of my household: Myself, 'Alī, Ḥamza, and Ja'far.'"* (Ṣadūq, vol. 22, p. 274, h:20).



Similarly, it is reported from Imam al-Şādiq, peace be upon him, from his father, peace be upon him, who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: '*People were created from various trees, and I and Ja'far were created from one tree,*' or he said: '*From one clay.*'" (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, vol. 15, p. 72; Al-Majlisī, vol. 21, p. 64).

4: Among the Masters of Paradise

In a hadith from the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, he said: "We, the sons of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, are the masters of the people of Paradise: The Messenger of Allah, Ḥamza the master of martyrs, Ja'far the one with two wings, 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and the Mahdī." (Al-Majlisī, vol. 22, p. 275, h:22; Al-Ṭūsī, p. 183).

5: Beloved to the Best of Creation

Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, was beloved to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family. (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, vol. 15, p. 72).

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, designated a place for Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, beside the mosque. Ja'far was esteemed by his brother, the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī, peace be upon him, and he was generous, noble, dignified, and highly respected. He never turned away anyone who sought his help through Ja'far.

It is narrated by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and Ibn al-Athīr with a reliable chain from al-Sha'bi who said: "*I heard Abū Abdullah b. Ja'far saying: 'Whenever I asked my uncle 'Alī for something and he refused, I would say to him: 'By the right of Ja'far, give it to me!'*" (Ibn Qudāma, p. 164; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, vol. 1, p. 211; al-Balādhurī, vol. 2, p. 295-299), (then he would give me)." (*Al-Ashraf*, vol. 1, p. 18; Al-Majlisī, vol. 21, p. 64; al-Balādhurī, vol. 2, p. 295-299).



6: The Special Choice

Ja'far al-Ṭayyār, may Allah's peace be upon him, was chosen by Allah, the Exalted, in a special way. It is narrated with a chain from Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: *"Indeed, my Lord chose me in three from among my family, and I am the master of the three and the most God-fearing among them: He chose me, 'Alī, and Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, and Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib..."* (*Al-Qommī*, vol. 2, p. 347; *Al-Majlisī*, vol. 22, p. 276, h:26; *Al-Ashraf*, vol. 1, p. 17).

7: The Best of People

It is narrated by 'Aṭiyya from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī who said: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: *"The best of people are Ḥamza, Ja'far, and 'Alī."* (*Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd*, vol. 15, p. 72; *Al-Ashraf*, vol. 1, p.18).

8: Ja'far's Return to Medina

When Ja'far was returning, the Negus equipped him and his companions with a fine outfit, ordered them to be clothed, and carried them in two ships. (*al-Ṭabarsī*:101).

When he arrived with a group of Muslims who had stayed with him and a group who had converted to Islam from Abyssinia, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said, *"I do not know what fills me with more happiness, the conquest of Khaybar or the coming of Ja'far."* He embraced him and kissed him between his eyes. (*Al-Balādhurī*, vol. 1, p. 225).

Saduq narrated with a chain of transmission from al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon them all) (From al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, from his father 'Alī b. Moḥammad, from his father Moḥammad b. 'Alī, from his father al-Riḍā 'Alī b. Mūsā, from his father al-Sadiq Ja'far b. Moḥammad, from his father Moḥammad b. 'Alī al-Bāqir, from his father Zayn al-'Ābidin 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, from his father al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, from his father from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon them all):



"When Ja'far came to him from Abyssinia, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) stood up to greet him, taking twelve steps towards him, embraced him, kissed him between his eyes, and wept. He said, 'I do not know which of the two I am more pleased with, your arrival, O Ja'far, or Allah's victory through your brother at Khaybar,' and he cried tears of joy at the sight." (al-Ṣadūq, vol. 1, p. 231; No. 4, ch:26; Al-Ṣadūq, vol. 2, p. 572, N:58, ch12, al-Māmaqānī, vol. 1-2, p. 212).

Second: The Distinguishing Characteristics of Ja'far b. Abī Tālib (a)

Ja'far b. Abī Tālib (a) is one of the most prominent figures in Islamic history. He was distinguished by many virtues and qualities that made him highly respected and esteemed among Muslims. Among his most notable characteristics that distinguish him from others are enumerated as follows:

The First Distinction: The One with Two Wings

This attribute is unique to Ja'far b. Abī Tālib (as) and his nephew Abū al-Faḍl al-'Abbās (as). Allah the Almighty granted them this unique distinction, bestowing upon them two wings with which they can fly wherever they wish in Paradise. This indicates their esteemed position, high status, and honor with Allah, His Messenger (pbuh) and the pure members of his household (pbuh). Their elevated rank is reflected in a narration from Imam 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sajjād (as), who said: "May Allah have mercy on my uncle al-'Abbās. He sacrificed himself and was loyal to his brother, until his hands were cut off. Allah granted him two wings with which he flies with the angels in Paradise, just as He granted to Ja'far b. Abī Tālib (as). 'Abbās has so high a status before Allah that all martyrs will envy on the Day of Judgment." (Ṣadūq, p. 68, H:101).

The Second Distinction: Leader of the People in the Battle of Mu'tah

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) entrusted Ja'far al-Ṭayyār (peace be upon him) with the banner of the Battle of Mu'tah, appointing him as the commander of the battle. Despite the critical and dangerous nature of this battle, Ja'far was more than capable and deserving of this role.



It is widely reported in general Islamic sources that the first person given the banner in the Battle of Mu'tah was Zayd b. Ḥāritha (May Allah be pleased with him). However, this is not correct. According to the words of the source of Allah's knowledge (peace be upon them), the first person to be given the banner and the leadership of the battle by the Prophet was his beloved Ja'far al-Ṭayyār (peace be upon him). If Ja'far was martyred, then the banner would pass to Zayd b. Ḥārithah, and if he was martyred, then to 'Abdullah b. Rawāḥa (may Allah be pleased with them both).

First Point: The Role of Ja'far al-Ṭayyār in Islam

While in Abyssinia, Ja'far demonstrated exceptional diplomatic skills. The Quraysh of Mecca sent emissaries to persuade the Abyssinian king, Negus (or Najashi), to extradite the Muslim refugees. Ja'far eloquently defended the Muslims before the king, explaining the principles of Islam and highlighting its similarities with Christianity. His speech impressed the Negus, who then granted the Muslims asylum and ensured their safety.

1. Return to Medina and Continued Service:

As mentioned earlier, Ja'far and the other Muslims stayed in Abyssinia for several years. He returned to Medina around 628 CE, after the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya, when it was safer for Muslims. Upon his return, Ja'far continued to support the Islamic community and participated in significant events, including the Battle of Khaybar.

2. Legacy and Influence:

Ja'far's legacy extended beyond his life. His commitment to Islam and his leadership during critical periods helped to solidify the Muslim community's presence and resolve. He is remembered with great respect and honor, and his story continues to be told as an example of faith, courage, and dedication to the cause of Islam.

In summary, Ja'far al-Ṭayyār's role in promoting and spreading Islam involved early conversion, leadership in seeking refuge, effective diplomacy, ongoing support for the Muslim community, military contributions, and his lasting legacy as a martyr and leader.



Second Point: The Prayer of Ja‘far as a Gift from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)

It is narrated in al-Kāfī al-Sharīf from Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (a) who said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said to Ja‘far: 'O Ja‘far, shall I grant you something? Shall I give you something? Shall I present you with something?' Ja‘far replied, 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah.'"

He (the Messenger of Allah) said: "People thought he would give him gold or silver, so they gathered for that. Then he said to him: 'I will give you something which, if you perform every day, will be better for you than the world and everything in it. And if you perform it every two days, it will forgive you what is between them. And if you perform it every Friday, or every month, or every year, it will forgive you what is between them.' Then he taught him the Prayer of Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār."

It is narrated from Imam al-Riḍā (as) from his father (peace be upon him) that a man asked his father Ja‘far b. Moḥammad (peace be upon them both) about Ṣalāt al-Tasbīḥ (Prayer of *Tasbīḥ*). He said: "That is the gift. My father told me, from my grandfather ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (as) who said: When Ja‘far b. Abī Ṭālib (as) returned from Abyssinia, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) met him at a distance from his encampment at Khaybar. When he saw him, Ja‘far hurried to him, and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) embraced him and spoke to him for a while. Then he mounted al-‘Aḍbā’ (his camel) and had Ja‘far ride behind him. When they were settled on the mount, he turned to him and said: 'O Ja‘far, O best of men, shall I present you with something? Shall I give you something? Shall I choose you for something?'"

He said: "People thought he would give Ja‘far a great amount of wealth!" He said: "This was because Allah had granted His Prophet the conquest of Khaybar and its lands, wealth, and people. Ja‘far replied, 'Yes, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you.' So, he taught him the *Ṣalāt al-Tasbīḥ*."



It is narrated that it is the best prayer after the obligatory ones, among the recommended prayers. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh gifted it to Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib (as) after his return from Abyssinia, in honor of his continuous struggle for Islam) Al-Majlisī, p. 320-321). The Prophet (pbuh) taught this prayer to his cousin Ja'far al-Ṭayyār after his arrival on the day of the conquest of Khaybar. This pleased the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) when Ja'far returned from Abyssinia. He went to meet him and taught him the Prayer of Tasbīḥ in recognition of his continuous struggle) Al Sadok, vol. 1, p. 553; Al-Majlisī, p. 320-321; Al Huor Al Aameli, vol. 8, p. 51). From that time, it was attributed to him and became known as the Prayer of Ja'far al-Ṭayyār. This prayer is also called the Prayer of the Gift (Ṣalat al-Ḥabwah), and it is named so because the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) bestowed it upon Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib (as). (Al Sadok, vol. 1, p. 552).

Third Point: The Martyrdom of Ja'far (a)

It is narrated *al-Kāfi* from Abū Baṣīr, from Abū 'Abdullah (as), who said: "While the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) was in the mosque, everything high was lowered for him and everything low was raised for him, until he saw Ja'far fighting the disbelievers. He said: 'Ja'far has been killed,' and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) felt a pang in his stomach..." (Kolayni, vol. 8, p. 376, h:565; Al-Majlisī, vol. 21, p. 85).

Jabir said: "On the day of the battle, the Prophet (pbuh) led us in the Fajr prayer, then ascended the pulpit and said: 'Your brothers have met the polytheists in battle,' and he began to describe their skirmishes. He said: 'Zayd b. Ḥārithah has been killed, and the banner has fallen,' then he said: 'Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib has taken the banner and advanced with it,' then he said: 'His hand has been cut off, and he has taken the banner with his other hand,' then he said: 'His other hand has been cut off, and he has taken the banner with his chest,' then he said: 'Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib has been killed, and the banner has fallen, then 'Abdullah b. Rawāḥah has taken it.' He then mentioned the number of polytheists and Muslims killed, naming them one by one. Then he said: 'Abdullah b. Rawāḥah has been killed...'



He then descended from the pulpit and went to Ja'far's house, called for 'Abdullah b. Ja'far, and seated him on his lap, rubbing his head. His mother, Asmā' bint 'Umays, said: 'O Messenger of Allah, you are rubbing his head as if he were an orphan!' He said: 'Ja'far has been martyred today,' and the eyes of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) welled up with tears. He said: 'His hands were cut off before he was martyred, and Allah has given him two wings of green emerald with which he flies in Paradise with the angels as he wishes.'" (Al-Majlisī, vol. 21, p. 53)

According to historians, when the battle became intense, Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib dismounted his reddish horse and hamstringed it, then fought until he was martyred. Ja'far was the first to hamstring his horse in Islam. He was found with over eighty wounds from arrows, strikes, and stabs. (Ibn Shahar Ashob, vol. 1, p. 205). Ja'far al-Ṭayyār (peace be upon him) was martyred in the Battle of Mu'tah in the month of Jumāda al-Awwal in the eighth year of the Hijra.

Fourth Point: The Blessed Tomb of the Martyr Ja'far al-Ṭayyār (s)

His honored shrine is located where he was martyred in the town of Mu'tah, which is now part of the Southern Mazar district in Karak Governorate. It is 12 kilometers from the city of Karak and 140 kilometers south of the Jordanian capital, Amman. The town is home to the first university in southern Jordan, named Mutah University) I took the information from Wikipedia website).

The shrine and mosque are visited by pilgrims from around the world. We do not know the source of the narration that Moḥammad Ḥusayn Heikal relied on when he said, "According to one narration, Ja'far's body was carried to Medina and buried three days after Khālid b. al-Walīd and the army arrived there."

The late Sheikh Moḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥarz al-Dīn narrated in the footnote of his grandfather's book, "*Marāqid al-Ma'ārif*," that the late researcher al-Sayyid 'Abdul Razzāq al-Mūsawī al-Muqarram said:



"The noble literary figure al-Sayyid ʿAbdul Jabbār al-Wardī al-Kazimī told me on Saturday, 10th Jumāda al-Awwal, 1386 AH in Damascus that the noble ʿAbdullah from Amman, who is a lawyer in the Sharīʿa court, told him in the village of Jericho in 1383 AH that in 1942, he went with Sharīf ʿAbdullah b. al-Ḥusayn, King of Jordan, to repair the grave of Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār in Mu'tah. When they reached the grave, they found it demolished. Al-Sharīf ʿAbdullah, the lawyer in the Sharīʿa court, descended alone into the grave by order of al-Sharīf al-Amīr ʿAbdullah and saw Jaʿfar Al-Ṭayyār's body intact, his clothes blood-stained and the sword still in his neck. Nothing had changed from his body as if he had just died. The lawyer swore repeatedly with solemn oaths that they found him in this state. Then, al-Amīr ʿAbdullah b. al-Malik Ḥusayn rebuilt the grave and the mosque that stands there now.

Conclusion

Faith, sincerity in work, belief, and patience in the face of trials elevate a person to high and noble ranks. Allah Almighty said in Sūrah al-Zumar, verse 10: **'Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.'** Truthful is Allah, the Highest, the Most Great. Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār was a faithful follower of Islam and the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. He migrated, persevered, and strived, achieving what he sought, which was martyrdom. Allah granted him a high and noble status and replaced his hands with wings to fly with in Paradise wherever he wished. Peace be upon Jaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib al-Ṭayyār, on the day he was born, on the day he was martyred, and on the day, he will be resurrected alive.



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