

Glossary

Ali Abu Talib, Imam: (600–661 AD) The cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, he was the fourth rightly-guided caliph and first pure Imam. The *imamate* (leadership) originates with him and he and eleven of his descendants are representatives of both the exoteric and esoteric dimension of Islam. According to the Shi'ites, he was selected at a place outside of Makkah called Ghadir Khumm by the Prophet as his 'entrusted' (wasi) and successor just after the Farewell Pilgrimage of the Prophet.

Age of Ignorance: The period of multitheism, *kufr* and idolatry before the appearance of Islam and the revival of monotheism.

Ali Rida, Imam: (765–818 AD) The eighth pure Imam who was chosen as the successor to the caliphate by the Abbasid al-Ma'mun but due to his immense popularity among the people, he was martyred by the caliph. He is buried in Mashhad which is a center of pilgrimage in Iran.

dhimmah: People of the Book who live in Muslim lands and are accorded hospitality and protection by Islam on condition of acknowledging Islamic political domination and paying the *jizyah* tax.

Hasan Askari, Imam: (846–874 AD) He was the eleventh pure Imam who lived in extreme secrecy in Samarra because of the continuous surveillance of the caliph's security forces. He married the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, Nargis Khatun, who had embraced Islam and sold herself into slavery in order to enter the household of the Imam. From this marriage the twelfth Imam was born.

Hasan ibn Ali, Imam: (625–670 AD) The second pure Imam who was caliph for a short period of time before the caliphate was usurped by Mu'awiyah, the founder of the Umayyid dynasty.

Ja'far Sadiq, Imam: (702–765 AD) The sixth pure Imam who continued the propagation of Shi'ite sciences to the extent that Shi'ite law is named after him. He taught over 4000 students including Abu Hanifah, the founder of one of the four Sunni schools of law.

Malik Ashtar: The governor of Egypt during the caliphate of Ali, peace be upon him, who wrote him a famous letter about how to rule people in a fair and just way.

minbar. The place within a mosque from which a sermon is delivered, it is most often made of wood and consists of stairs leading to a flat seat upon which the speaker sits.

Muhammad Baqir, Imam: (676–733 AD) The fifth pure Imam who was a well-known teacher of the religious sciences.

mujtahid: A person who engages in strenuous endeavor to reason a religious issue (*ijtihad*).

Musa ibn ja'far, Imam: (746–799 AD) The seventh pure Imam who faced extreme hardship due to the renewed opposition of the Abbasid caliphate against the Shi'ites.

Sunnah: The customs, behavior and traditions of the Prophet of Islam.

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