



## FAŽL, B. ŠĀDĀN NĪŠĀPŪRĪ AZDĪ, ABŪ MOḤAMMAD

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**FAŽL, b. Šādān NĪŠĀPŪRĪ AZDĪ, ABŪ MOḤAMMAD**, Imami traditionalist, theologian, and jurist (d. Moḥarram 260/October-November 873). After studying with his father Šādān b. Ḳalīl (according to several sources, Ḳalīl was Šādān's *laqab*; see Moḥaddeṭ Ormavī, pp. 44-48), Fażl moved as a young man from Persia to Baghdad, where he met Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Fażżāl (d. 224/838-39), followed him to Kūfa, and studied with him there (Kaššī, pp. 433-34; Najāšī, pp. 34-35). Fażl's arrival in Baghdad may have followed his expulsion from Nīšāpūr by order of the governor of Khorasan 'Abd-Allāh b. Ṭāher (213-30/828-45), who appears to have disapproved of some of Fażl's Shi'ite views (Kaššī, p. 452). Fażl is counted among the disciples of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh Imams. Some authorities also maintain that he transmitted from Imam 'Alī al-Reżā (d. 203/818-19, q.v.; Najāšī, p. 307). In various passages Fażl, indeed, mentions having heard traditions from the eighth Imam (e.g., Ebn Bābawayh, 1970, II, p. 119), and he could perhaps have met him during Imam 'Alī al-Reżā's stay in Nīšāpūr in 201/816-17. According to Kaššī's informant, Abū-'Alī Bayhaqī, Fażl was in Bayhaq when news reached him of an impending Kharijite attack. He left, was overcome by fatigue, fell ill, and died (Kaššī, p. 455). He was buried in Nīšāpūr, and Shi'ites used to frequent his grave. Fażl's death preceded by several months that of Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī (Modarressi, 1993, p. 39).

The sources record many complimentary statements that the eleventh Imam



made about Faẓl, yet the Imam did not always approve of Faẓl's views and actions. For example, he is said to have complained that Faẓl had prevailed on the Nīšāpūrīs not to pay their religious dues to Imam al-'Askarī's agent (*wakīl*), Ayyūb b. al-Nāb (or al-Bāb; Kaššī, pp. 454-55; Modarressi, 1993, p. 39). The agent's name is not mentioned elsewhere; perhaps the reference is to Ayyūb b. Nūḥ b. Darrāj, described by Aḥmad Najāšī (p. 102) as an agent of the tenth and eleventh Imams).

Like other followers of Hešām b. Ḥakam, Faẓl advanced the view that God is a body unlike any other body (Ebn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, III, p. 228). He held that the Imams have a thorough knowledge of the law and of the correct interpretation of the Qur'ān but argued, in opposition to the views of some Nīšāpūrī Shi'ites, that the Imams do not know such things as the inner thoughts of men, and do not understand all human languages and the languages of all birds and other animals (Kaššī, p. 452-53). That Faẓl was strongly opposed to the extremist Shi'ites can be seen not only from the titles of some of his works, but also from his critical pronouncements on *ḡolāt* such as Abū Somayna (Kaššī, p. 457). Faẓl saw himself as the successor of Yūnos b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān and Abū Ja'far Sakkāk in refuting the beliefs of non-Imamis (Kaššī, p. 452). He was a supporter of the use of reasoning in law and theology (Madelung, p. 84); in this he preceded other Imami scholars in Nīšāpūr, notably Moḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Jonayd (fl. mid-4th/10th cent.), who wrote a work of *kalām* in defense of Faẓl (cf. Najāšī, p. 388).

Faẓl is the author of numerous works on legal, doctrinal, and theological subjects. According to his younger contemporary Yaḥyā b. Zakarīyā' Ganjī, he composed 180 works; forty-eight were still known to Najāšī (p. 307). Thirty of these titles are also cited by Abū Ja'far Moḥammad Ṭūsī (*Fehrest*, pp. 154-55), who, in addition, mentions two further titles. A major work that has survived (though no single manuscript containing the entire work appears to exist; see Moḥaddet Ormavī, pp. 61-69) is the *Ketāb al-izāḥ fi'l-radd 'alā sā'er al-feraq*. If it is indeed by Faẓl (something that remains to be established; see Pākatčī), then it constitutes one of the earliest Imami works of anti-Sunni polemics. It contains attacks on the first three caliphs and the Morje'a criticisms of the Kharijites and others, and a defense of various Imami practices and beliefs. Faẓl's *Ketāb al-'elal* appears to be preserved in its entirety in two works of Ebn Bābawayh/Bābūya, the *'Elal al-šarā'e'* (pp. 251-75) and the *'Oyūn aḡbār al-Rezā* (II, pp. 97-119). Faẓl's *Ketāb al-ḡayba* is cited in some later sources (Golpāyagānī, pp. 320, 466-67; *al-Darī'a* XVI, p. 78, no. 395) and may therefore



be extant. Excerpts from Fażl's *Ketāb al-qā'em* are preserved in Ḥasan b. Solaymān Ḥellī's *Moḥtaẓar* (pp. 4, 5, 89-90); furthermore, traditions on the *Qā'em* on the authority of Fażl as cited by Ṭūsī (1965, pp. 260-63, 265-77, 281-86) may have been taken from this work. Kašši has preserved statements of Fażl on various Companions, *tābe'ūn*, and later scholars (e.g., pp. 21, 39-40, 65, 107, 220, 378, 410-11); some of these statements are said to have been taken from a book of his (*ba'ż kotobeh*; e.g., pp. 104, 438, 457), evidently a work of *rejāl* (cf. Āgā Bozorg Ṭehrānī, p. 361). Fażl's *Ketāb al-naqẓ 'alā Abī 'Obayd fī'l-ṭalāq* is partially preserved in Abū Ja'far Kolaynī's *Kāfi* (VI, pp. 93-96). Some of his views on the laws of inheritance are likewise cited there (*Kāfi* VII, pp. 88-90, 95-96, 98-99, 105-08, 116-18, 120-25, 142, 145-46, 148-49, 161-62, 166-68); these may well have been taken from Fażl's *Ketāb al-farā'eẓ*, which existed in three versions of varying lengths. Of Fażl's polemical works, the *Radd 'alā'l-Qarāmeṭa* is the earliest known refutation of this sect, and his *Radd 'alā Ebn Karrām* is the earliest known treatise against the founder of the Karrāmiya (van Ess, 1980, p. 75); a fragment of the latter work is cited by Ṭūsī (1964, II, pp. 346-47). Fażl's works and teachings were transmitted chiefly by his disciple 'Alī b. Moḥammad b. Qotayba Nišāpūri (Najāšī, p. 259).

As already noted by Ṭūsī (*Fehrest*, p. 155), the exegete and traditionist Abu'l-'Abbās Fażl b. Šādān Rāzī who, according to Ebn al-Nadīm (p. 287), was claimed by both Sunnis and Shi'ites, is probably not the same person as the subject of this article (cf. Ebn al-Jazarī, II, p. 10, where his death-date is given as ca. 290/903).

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