

The life of Lars Levi Laestadius

Lars Levi Laestadius was born 10th of January 1800 in a settler family in Jäkkvik. Both on the father's and mother's side, there was Sami influence and several priests existed, in the family, in earlier generations. In Jäkkvikk, the family lived in poor conditions until 1807 or 1808, when the family moved to Kvikkjokk. Lars Levi's eldest brother Carl-Eric served there as Minister of Commissariat. Life became easier and Lars Levi and his younger brother Petrus received lessons in, among other things, Latin and Greek. Lars Levi's lifelong interest in botany was also founded here. The brothers socialized with the local peers and learned Lule Sami.

In 1816, the brothers went to Härnösand to study at the high school. In 1820 Lars Levi began studying to become a priest in Uppsala and in 1825 the Bida brothers were ordained. Directly after the ordination, Lars Levi was appointed parish priest in Arjeplog. But he only worked there for a short time. In 1826 he was named vicar of Karesuando.

Lars Levi married Brita Katarina Alstadius in 1827, daughter of settlers from south of Kvikkjokk. The couple had fifteen children.

Laestadius became the leader of the revival within the church, which after him is called Laestadianism. He was also a prominent botanist, the author of several books and writings, and a vigorous advocate of abstinence.

Lars died 21 February 1861 in Pajala parish in Norrbotten.