



امام حسن

IMAM
HASSAN
BIN ALI (AS)
Lord of Paradise

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FAWZI AL-SAIF

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Contents

preface	9
Imam Hassan (as) from Birth to Martyrdom	11
The birth of Al-Hassan (as), the grandson of the Holy Prophet (saw):	11
The Holy Prophet (saw)'s rituals after the birth of Al-Hassan (as):	14
A note on the name of Harun's son:	18
The Holy Prophet (saw)'s narrations on Al-Hassan (as):	18
Al-Hassan (as) in the time of the three caliphs:	25
Al-Hassan (as) during the caliphate of his father, Al-Murtadha (as):	27

Al-Hassan (as), the leader of his nation:33

The Peace treaty:35

Did Imam Hassan (as) take part in the Caliphs'
conquests?38

preface

1. The book in your hands, dear reader, is an abridgement of the biography of one of the fourteen infallibles in Shia Islam. Its pages constitute about 25% of the original book, which also bears the same title. With Allah's Grace and Will, the original book will be translated at a later date.
2. This book, and the other books in the same series, are aimed at the young generation of Shia Muslims who do not have a good command of the Arabic language, in which the original book was written. It therefore assumes a basic knowledge of the concepts related to the Infallible and their life, and seeks to analyze and expand on them.

We note that there are very few translated books in English

on the lives of the Imams, especially for young English speakers. This is despite the importance of the topic, and it is one of the reasons that prompted this translation project.

3. Since this book and the rest of the series have been translated by multiple individuals and in different ways, it is natural that they will not all be in a consistent style. We would therefore be grateful if the reader would help us by pointing out any errors or observations they may have, so that they can be corrected in future editions.

I ask Allah Almighty to reward the reader, the author of these pages, and the translators with His recompense and blessings, and the intercession of the Infallibles, may peace and blessing be upon them.

Fawzi Muhammad Taqi Al Saif

Tarut - Qatif

20/09/1445 H

Imam Hassan (as) from Birth to Martyrdom

The birth of Al-Hassan (as), the grandson⁽¹⁾ of the Holy Prophet (saw):

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Fatimah Al-Zahra (as)'s marriage to Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) was in Dhul-Hijjah, two years after the Holy Prophet (saw) migrated to Madinah. On the 15th of Ramadan the following year, 3 AH, the first child was born in the blessed Alawi Fatimi house.

(1) Usually referred to in Arabic as Sibti, meaning "the daughter's son".

There is a debate on whether it was Imam Hassan (as) who was born after only six months of pregnancy, or if it was his brother Imam Hussain (as). The second possibility is supported by some narrations⁽¹⁾ saying that between the two brothers was six months and a single cycle⁽²⁾. Other narrations mention similarities between Imam Hussain (as) and Prophet Yahya (as), the son of Zakaria (as). One of these similarities, in addition to their martyrdom and being killed by the tyrant of their times, was that they were both born after a six-month pregnancy.

However, these are contradicted by the fact that Imam Hussain (as) was born, according to the most likely possibility, on the 3rd of Shaaban, in the 4th year AH. If the time between Imam Hassan (as)'s birth and Imam Hussain (as)'s conception in the womb was only one cycle, it is not possible for Imam Hussain (as)'s birth to be in Shaaban.

This is because, if we assume Imam Hassan (as) was born in the middle of Ramadan, and that a single cycle, at least ten days, passed after that, that would mean Imam Hussain (as)'s conception must have happened at the end of Ramadan. And if we are saying that Fatimah (as)'s pregnancy with him was the minimum length, so six months, just like the narration compared

(1) Al-Kulayni, Muhammad bin Ya'qoub (d. 329 AH); Al-Kafi, V2, page 505: A number of our companions have narrated through Ahmad bin Muhammad, through Ali bin Al-Hakam, through AbdulRaman Al-Azrami, that Imam Sadiq (as) has said: "The time between the birth of Al-Hassan (as) and the conception of Al-Hussain (as) was one cycle, and the time between their two births was six months and ten days."

(2) In Arabic pronounced as "tuhr", literally meaning "purity". So, the time between two menstrual cycles that does not involve bleeding.

him to Prophet Yahya (as) with, that would mean Imam Hussain (as)'s birth must have occurred in Rabee's Al-Awwal⁽¹⁾, six months later! But the most accepted date by historians is the 3rd of Shaaban. So that means that either the date of birth is inaccurate, or that six months was, in fact, not the length of the pregnancy⁽²⁾, or that more than one cycle had passed before

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- (1) And that is what Sheikh Mufid chose in his book *Al-Muqni'ah*, as did Sheikh Tusi in *Al-Tahdheeb*, Shaheed Al-Awwal (The First Martyr; Muhammad bin Makki Al-Amili) in *Al-Duroos*, Al-Baha' I in his historical compilation, and Kashif Al-Ghita in *Kashf Al-Ghita*. Sheikh Abbas Al-Qummi has also been reported to elect this choice in his book *Al-Anwar Al-Bahiyyah*, page 97. I would say that that is also the choice of Ibn Tawq Al-Qatifi in his pamphlets, V4, page 76, where he insists that the birth of Imam Hassan (as) was in the 15th of Ramadan, saying: "That is what the consensus is, and it is stated in the texts that our scholars have followed in their actions and rulings through the ages..."
 - (2) That is what is understood from the words of Sheikh Muhammad Hadi Ma'rifah in his book *Al-Tafseer Al-Athari Al-Jami'*, V1, page 232, where he expresses his doubts the accuracy of Al-Azrami's narration, saying: "Al-Azrami also has several dubious narrations, including what he narrated about Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as): That there was a single cycle between them, and between their births was six months and ten days. The narration stating that Imam Hassan (as) was born on the 15th of Ramadan, year 3 AH, is also very popular and accepted among the Shia. Imam Hussain (as) was born on the 5th of Shaaban, year 4 AH, ten months and twenty days after his brother. This is clearly stated by Ibn Shahr Ashoub in *Al-Manaqib*, Al-Mufid in *Al-Irshad*, and Al-Tusi in *Al-Misbah*. As for Sheikh Al-Gharawi, his choice is evident in *The Encyclopaedia of Islamic History*, V2, page 441: "Al-Tabarani narrated in *Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer*, and through him in *Al-Hussain and Tradition*, through a chain of narrations extending to Hafs bin Ghiyath, that Imam Sadiq (as) said: 'Between Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) was one cycle,' without the addition of: 'between their births was six months and ten days.' This corresponds

his conception⁽¹⁾. Another possibility is that Imam Hassan (as) was not actually born on the 15th of Ramadan⁽²⁾! Whichever it is, one of these facts must be discarded.⁽³⁾

There is another possibility accepted by some scholars, which is that the six-month pregnancy was that of Imam Hassan (as), not of Imam Hussain (as), and that the confusion was caused by the similarity between the two names in the written documents.

The Holy Prophet (saw)'s rituals after the birth of Al-Hassan (as):

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 with the normal pregnancy length that Ibn Shahr Ashoub mentioned in Al-Manaqib with no contradiction.

- (1) That seems to be what Sheikh Karbasi nominated in Al-Seerah Al-Hussainiyah, V1, page 140, where he says: "The conception of Imam Hussain (as) was in the middle of Safar, 150 nights after the birth of Imam Hassan (as). As for what is said about it being 50 nights is simply a mistake, where the word 'hundred' must have been accidentally cut out." But the Sheikh did not go into the subject of "one cycle", which is posed by Al-Azrami's narration.
- (2) This is what was chosen by the late Sayyed Jafar Al-Amili in his book The Biography of Al-Hassan (as), V1, page 90, where he did not accept that Imam Hassan (as) was born in the middle of Ramadan, because it was not verified by an authentic source, as opposed to the source stating he was born six months into his pregnancy. It seems he agreed with what Al-Hurr Al-Amili found to be true in Mir'aat Al-Uqool, V5, page 366: "...But it seems that with these multiple reports, it is possible to reject the possibility that Imam Hassan (as) was born in Ramadan, because it is not supported by an authentic narration."
- (3) We also discussed this matter in our book I am Al-Hussain bin Ali, page 106, when talking about Imam Hussain (as)'s birth.

It is said that when Imam Hassan (as) was born, he was wrapped in a yellow cloth and brought to the Holy Prophet (saw) to perform the mustahab rituals, including reciting the adhan in his right ear, and the iqamah in his left ear, and cleansing him with his spittle, Zamzam water, or with some dates. But when the Holy Prophet (saw) saw him in a yellow cloth, he quickly removed it, and in some narrations he forbade from wrapping a newborn in anything other than a white cloth⁽¹⁾.

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- (1) Al-Tabarani, Abul-Qasim (d. 360 AH); The Accounts of Al-Hassan bin Ali bin Abi Talib (as), page 34: Surah bint Mashrah, says: "I was among the women present when Fatimah (as) was in labour. The Holy Prophet (saw) approached us and said: 'How is she?' I said: 'She is strained, O Prophet of Allah.' He said: 'If she gives birth, do not do anything with the baby before I do.'" She says: "She gave birth, and we calmed the baby down and wrapped it in a yellow cloth. The Holy Prophet (saw) came and asked: 'What have you done?' I said: 'She gave birth to the baby. I took the baby, soothed it, and wrapped it in a cloth.' The Holy Prophet (saw) said: 'You disobeyed me!' I said: 'I seek refuge in Allah Almighty from disobedience to Him and the wrath of His Messenger!' He said: 'Bring him to me!' So I brought him to the Holy Prophet (saw). He took off the yellow cloth, replaced it with a white one, and spit in his mouth."

In Shia sources, Muhammad Taqi Al-Tustari (Shushtari) in Al-Akhbar Al-Dakheelah, V1, page 17: Al-Saduq narrated in Uyun Akhbar Al-Ridha, with three different chains of narrators, through Ahmad bin Aamir Al-Ta'i, and through Ahmad bin Abdullah Al-Shaybani, and through Dawud bin Sulayman Al-Farra', that Imam Ridha (as) narrates through his fathers (as) that Imam Sajjad (as) said that Asmaa' said: "Fatimah (as) told me that when she gave birth to Al-Hassan (as), the Holy Prophet (saw) said: 'Asmaa', bring me my son', so I brought him the child in a yellow cloth, so he threw off the cloth, recited the Adhan in his right ear, and the Iqamah in his left ear. He then said to Ali (as): 'What name did you give my son?' He said: 'I would not do anything without your approval, but I wish to name him Harb.' So the Holy Prophet (saw) said: 'And I would not

Research suggests that white is the best colour for newborns, because of the way it helps to distinguish other colours. It is similar to the way photographers and videographers hold a white paper in front of the camera lens, calibrating the camera so that when they remove the paper it can distinguish colours more naturally.

This may have also been an indication to the effect colours have on physical and mental health, especially those of an infant⁽¹⁾. So did the Holy Prophet (saw) switch the yellow cloth for a white one for either reason? Or maybe both? Or maybe it was a devotional reason we are told to do that we simply do not comprehend.

.....

do anything without my Lord's approval.' So Jibreel (as) descended upon them and said: 'O Muhammad, the High and Exalted sends his salutations to you, and says to you: "Ali to you is like Haroun was to Musa, and there is no prophet after you. Name your son after the name of Haroun's son.'" So the Holy Prophet (saw) asked: 'And what was the name of the son of Haroun?' He said: 'Shubbar.' The Holy Prophet (saw) said, 'My tongue is Arabic,' so Jibreel (as) said 'Name him Al-Hassan.' Asmaa' said:

"So he named him Al-Hassan. Seven days after his birth, the Holy Prophet (saw) sacrificed two healthy rams for him, and gave the midwife a ram's thigh and a dinar. He then shaved Al-Hassan's hair, and gave its weight in silver as charity. He then coated the child's head in khalouq (Saffron perfume), and said to me: 'Asmaa', coating the child in blood is the tradition of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic age).

- (1) Some have even connected the narration to the concept of colour therapy, a theory supported by the certain colours hospitals use in their wards and operation rooms, and even the doctors' clothes. And although it certainly requires more research, but humans, generally speaking, find themselves feeling depressed and miserable with some colours, but feel joyful and optimistic with other colours.

However, we normally try not to always lay things onto the devotional side, as we sometimes find mustahab and makruh acts that we can guess the reasons behind. For example, when reciting the adhan and iqamah in a newborn's ears, we are instilling important principles into the child through reciting a summary of religion into either ear, making that the first memory stored into the child's mind, which will undoubtedly have its effect on the life that lies ahead.

It certainly has a different effect than if the child's ears and memory is filled with music and commotion from the first instance of its life.

We should also point out certain manners that must be followed when choosing a name for the newborn. We find some families turning it into a large dispute, where the mother wants to be the one to choose the name because of the suffering she went through during pregnancy, while the father wants to pick because the child will be carrying his name. All of which turns a happy occasion into a fight! Meanwhile, we find Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) telling the Holy Prophet (saw) that he would not precede him in choosing the name for his son.

The narrations tell us that it is mustahab to choose an adequate and respectable name⁽¹⁾ for a newborn, rather than choosing a name based on what the father or mother likes,

(1) If the aforementioned narrations, where the Holy Prophet (saw) or the Imams (as) reply to the names of the sons of Harun by saying: "My tongue is Arabic", are authentic at all, then they indicate that a name should not just be a good name in itself, but also respectable in relation to the environment and society.

causing the poor child misery and pain for his entire life, as he is unable to change it nor accept it!

A note on the name of Harun’s son:

There is a number of narrations that compare Imam Ali (as) to Prophet Harun (as), and his sons to the sons of Harun (as), and the denial of his leadership to that of Harun (as). The intention of these narrations was to give the Muslims a comparison to something they are all familiar with, as they have all read the Quran, and all know the status Prophet Harun (as) had to Prophet Musa (as)⁽¹⁾.

These narrations also mention that it is mustahab to give aqeeqah, sacrificing an animal for the newborn, and to give charity for him, and also that it is makruh to do what they used to do before Islam, where they would cover the newborn in blood.

The Holy Prophet (saw)’s narrations on Al-Hassan (as):

Imam Hassan (as) grew up under the care of the Holy Prophet (saw) and his counselling. With his guidance, and Ali Al-Muratadha (as) and Fatimah Al-Zahra (as)’s custody, could you imagine what the product would be? We notice

(1) “Appoint for me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back through him, and make him my associate in my affair, so that we may glorify You greatly, and remember You greatly.” Surat Taha, verse 29 – 34.

something that may seem uninteresting for its obviousness and recurrence, but it must be touched upon every time it is observed. We see that the Holy Prophet (saw) has so many narrations about Imam Hassan (as) (and Imam Hussain (as)), tens of which are in Sunni books⁽¹⁾, and dozens of times more than that in our books. Now, what is interesting is that Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as) were three, four, or five years of age at best. This is considering the fact that, when his grandfather (saw) passed away, Imam Hassan (as) was seven years old. So what is the reason behind all these narrations? And why proclaim them in front of the people?

We will go over some of these narrations in the following pages, pointing out some of their deep and hidden meanings. But we will say here that which we have said in another place: the purpose behind narrations stating the attributes of some personalities was to show the true path that must be followed by the nation after the passing of the Holy Prophet (saw). It was completely natural for the nation to become fragmented after his passing, which is what happened, and for every faction to claim that they are more worthy of inheriting the Holy Prophet (saw)'s status. The majority, being the "companions" of the Holy Prophet (saw), found that they need to solidify their position as "the Prophet's successor in knowledge, profile, and method". Here came the role of "the trait narrations," where they made up narrations that contradict what has been correctly verified to

(1) Abul-Qasim bin Asakir (d. 571 AH), in his biography of Imam Hassan (as), cites around 200 narrations, most of which are from the Holy Prophet (as), speaking of the traits and attributes of Imam Hassan (as). And there is almost that number in Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra too.

have been said by the Holy Prophet (saw)! The deceptive frauds suddenly became the righteous leaders, and those leading to Hellfire became propagators to the "truth". But naturally, the words of the Holy Prophet (saw) never contradict.

1. When we observe the Holy Prophet (saw)'s narrations about the traits of Imam Hassan (as), we see a clear guide to survival in times of disarray and dispute. And that is what the nation should have been following.

He is the Lord of the youth of Paradise, and therefore, all those who stand against him cannot possibly be on the path of Paradise. And when we are told that he has the best grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, uncle, and aunt, and that he, the aforementioned, and all those who love him are in Paradise, that means people should gather round his banner and march behind him.

2. When the Holy Prophet (saw) would call for his grandson Al-Hassan (as) (and later his brother Al-Hussain (as) too), by saying "call for my sons"⁽¹⁾, saying it repeatedly and on many occasions, one can sense that there is an unspoken

(1) Al-Ameeni, Abdul-Hussain; Al-Ghadeer, V7, page 133: In this book, Al-Ameeni cites dozens of narrations in which the Holy Prophet (saw) refers to Al-Hassan (as), Al-Hussain (as), or both, as his son(s). This includes him saying to Ali (as): "You are my brother, and the father of my son," or the time he said: "Oh Allah, this is my son, Al-Hassan (as), and I love him, so I ask you to love him and love those who love him," or when he said to Al-Hassan (as): "This son of mine is a sayyed." He also said: "These are my sons. Whoever loves them, I love." And when he said: "Call my son," Al-Hassan bin Ali (as) came. "These two sons of mine are the gems of my life", meaning Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as).

warning. A warning that they will be opposed and rejected by a large faction of the nation, who will try with all their might to deny the kinship of Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) to the Holy Prophet (saw), claiming that “Our sons are the sons of our sons, but our daughters, their sons are the sons of unrelated men”⁽¹⁾! By doing so, they have turned down the clear statement of the Holy Quran, where it says: “Say, ‘Come! Let us call our sons and your sons...” when the Holy Prophet (saw) brought nobody but Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as). Hence, they have rejected the words of Allah Almighty, and the words of the Holy Prophet (saw), and for what?! The words of a poet to be followed only by his perverse equals!

And though those earlier in history stood against the Imams, blindly following the sons of Umayyah and the sons of Abbas with no tangible proof or divine backing, they did that in greed of power and wealth. But what is the matter with the miserable beings in the present times, defending an ideology and belief which has been thoroughly exposed as false? You see them constantly moving from one argument to another, vigorously trying to deny Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as)’s blood relation with their grandfather, the Holy Prophet (saw).

3. We see extensive efforts to manipulate narrations that clearly speak of the Imamate and leadership of Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), trying to dismiss them as emotional and inconsequential. We see them discounting

(1) An Arabic proverb.

narrations, like those saying they are “Imams, whether they are standing or sitting”, to the extent of denying them completely, or dismissing them as unreliable. Meanwhile, we find them highlighting narrations talking about how they urinated on the Holy Prophet (saw)’s clothes and such.

We see clear implications in our narrations, such as: “The Holy Prophet (saw) carried Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) on his back. Al-Hassan (as) was on his right ribs, and Al-Hussain (as) on his left. He walked, and then said, ‘Your ride is the best ride, and you are the best riders, and your father is even better than you.’”

Or what Salman (ra) narrated: “The Holy Prophet (saw) said about Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as): I love whoever loves them. And whoever I love, Allah Almighty loves. And whoever Allah Almighty loves, He grants Paradise. And I loathe those who loathe them and defy them. And whoever I loathe, Allah Almighty loathes. And whoever Allah Almighty loathes, He punishes with Hellfire, and they suffer endless agony.” Was the Holy Prophet (saw) perhaps talking of a time in which the hatred of AhlulBayt (as) will be a prevalent theme?

4. Something that catches the attention of scholars in the way the Holy Prophet (saw) treated Imam Hassan (as), and later Imam Hussain (as), is how he treated them like fully-grown adults, disregarding age completely, which was a huge factor especially in Arab society back then. On many occasions in those times, a person would be favoured for

nothing but their age⁽¹⁾. And yet, we find the Holy Prophet (saw) bringing them with him to Mubalahah, the first ever, and the most important, debate between Muslims and Christians in history. He acknowledges their witnessing of the treaty between Banu Thaqif and himself, even though he could have, theoretically, involved tens of other older companions as witnesses instead. According to historians, this is the letter of the Holy Prophet (saw) to Thaqif. He writes that: "They have the oath of Allah, besides whom there is no God, and the oath of Muhammad bin Abdullah, the Prophet, on what is in this document: that their valley is safe, fully under the protection of Allah Almighty... And witness to this manuscript of the treaty is: Ali bin Abi Talib, Al-Hassan bin Ali, and Al-Hussain bin Ali. This manuscript has been written as testimony"⁽²⁾. Is this a forewarning to a time in which Al-Hassan (as) and his brother will ascend the pulpit of their father and grandfather and stand up to the illegitimate caliph of their time? Is he trying to tell us that the testimony of Imam Hassan (as), which was accepted

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- (1) Some have argued in favour of the usurpation of Imam Ali (as) that, despite the Imam (as) being the bravest, wisest, most knowledgeable, and the first among them to Islam, there were those among them older than him! Note what it says in Muhammad Kard Ali's book, *Khutat Al-Sham*, V1, page 112: Abu Ubayda bin Al-Jarrah told Ali (as): "Cousin, you are still young in age, and those are the elders of your people. You do not have the experience they have, nor do you do things the way they do. I see Abu Bakr more capable, resilient, and educated than you in this matter, so submit to Abu Bakr. If you live long enough, you will one day be worthy of this position for your status, morals, knowledge, intellect, history, relatives, and in-laws".
 - (2) Al-Baghdadi, Ibn Saad (d. 230 AH); *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra*, V1, page 217.

by the Holy Prophet (saw), should be unconditionally accepted by those inferior to the Holy Prophet (saw)?

When the Holy Prophet (saw) passed away, his grandson Al-Hassan (as) was only seven years old. So it was as if the roof of his world was ripped off with the death of his blessed grandfather⁽¹⁾.

What made it worse was how Quraysh schemed against his father, and how they plotted to contest him for something they had no right to. And so Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) had to choose between responding with his hands tied behind his back, or being patient and turning a blind eye, and he found that the second option was the sounder option, and the most rational. And so he stayed silent, despite the pain he was enduring.

Not long had passed before he saw the Qurayshi brutality at the door of the Holy Prophet (saw), and in the body of Fatimah Al-Zahra (as), who left to the presence of her Lord Almighty, grief-stricken and heartbroken. Imam Hassan (as) goes to the mosque of the Holy Prophet (saw) and his pulpit, only to find somebody on the pulpit who is not the Holy Prophet (saw) nor his father. So he objects to him, saying: "Get off my father's pulpit, and go to your father's pulpit!"

(1) Al-Kulayni; Al-Kafi, V1, page 445: It is narrated that Imam Baqir (as) said: "When the Holy Prophet (saw) passed away, it was a very long night for his Household. It was as if no sky sheltered them, and no earth carried them. The Holy Prophet (saw) had united the near and far for the sake of Allah."

Al-Hassan (as) in the time of the three caliphs:

Imam Hassan (as)'s stance in the time of the three caliphs did not differ at all from that of his father. And naturally so, for his father once described him, saying: "I found you part of me, or rather I found you entirely me". Especially considering that Imam Hassan (as) was still in his youth in the time of the first two caliphs, and so he followed in his father's footsteps. Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) was never satisfied with those who came to rule, or their numerous blunders he refers to when he says, "By Allah, people had been plagued with blunders and conflicts, discolouration and controversy, but I persevered throughout the crisis..", and yet he never considered the matter personal to himself. To him, the entire matter of rule and succession was less significant to him than a "goat's sneeze", or "leftover pig meat in the hand of a leper"⁽¹⁾.

And yet, he did what he could to make sure that society was running smoothly. He never prevented his companions from contributing with what they could to fix the dent and correct the path, whether in peace with their knowledge and wisdom, or in war with their bravery and leadership, or even in politics, running subjects and nation equally competently.

(1) Nahjul-Balaghah, page 510: Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) said: "By Allah, this world of yours means less to me than leftover pig meat in the hand of a leper." The leftover meat being something insignificant, and the hand of a leper being something repulsive, the expression gives the notion of something overlooked and disregarded.

But that does not mean we should accept what some historians said about Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as) participating in the Islamic wars and conquests conducted by the caliphs. We have established elsewhere⁽¹⁾ that there is simply no evidence to support those claims.

And even further from the truth is what some so-called historians, followers of the Umayyad regime, claimed, which is that Imam Hassan (as) was a devoted supporter of Uthman! By doing so, they hit two birds with one stone: they boost Uthman's status by claiming Al-Hassan (as)'s support for him, and at the same time they diminish Imam Ali (as)'s status by claiming that his own son did not support his policies, finding them flawed and defective!

The fact of the matter is, 'supporter of Uthman' is a milder expression for 'Umayyad follower'! But how could that be true about Imam Hassan (as), who, immediately after the martyrdom of his father, marched out to fight Muawiyah and his his army, despite his army in Kufa being in a detrimental state! There will be a separate segment about his battles with the Umayyads later.

However, Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) were among the people Imam Ali (as) would send to prevent schemers from plotting against the caliph, from assassinating him, raiding his home, and attacking his family. Here we see the moral values of the Imam (as); he did not sit aside as a spectator, even though he could have, just like so many other "companions" did. This is

(1) Revise our book I am Al-Hussain bin Ali.

despite all the terrible things Uthman did to Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as)'s companions, including attacking, exiling, and defaming them, even disrespecting the Imam (as) himself!⁽¹⁾

And yet, the Imam (as) never took advantage of the Muslims' uprising against Uthman by provoking them or such, rather he did what he could to mediate between them and the caliph, fixing what could be fixed to at least ensure that Uthman's house would not be attacked. For this reason, the Imam (as) sent his sons, Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), to prevent that.

Hence, Imam Hassan (as), who was around thirty years of age at the time, would follow the lead of his father, obeying his every wish and order.

Al-Hassan (as) during the caliphate of his father, Al-Murtadha (as):

Like a thirsty herd flocking a cool oasis, the people flocked around Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as), requesting him to take the reins of the caliphate, and pledging their allegiance to him. Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as), however, was concerned that they would abandon him once they see his strict and meticulous method of following religious obligations⁽²⁾. But the crowd that

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- (1) To delve into some of his acts and transgressions against them, revise our book *The Followers of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)*.
 - (2) *Nahjul-Balaghah*, page 136: "Leave me and find somebody else. We are facing something that has numerous faces and colours. Hearts will not stand it, and minds will not comprehend it. The horizons have clouded, and the truth has been disguised. Know that I have

had gathered was so large that Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) were trampled⁽¹⁾, and Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as)'s lips were split. Imam Hassan (as) was his father's right-hand man, his loyal, unwavering companion. If Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) was in an army, marching to Basra, then Imam Hassan (as) is with Ammar bin Yasir and Malik Al-Ashtar and others, heading to Kufa to dismiss Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari⁽²⁾ from his position, and preparing people to fight the treacherous enemy in the Battle of Jamal⁽³⁾.

And if Al-Hassan (as)'s position to his father in wartime was like that of a standard bearer, leading the front lines (it was even said he was the one who killed the camel around which the battle revolved), then he had a leading role in peacetime as well. Witness to this is the numerous times in which Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) would nominate him to answer questions directed towards him, such as the incident when Muawiyah

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 answered you, and went ahead with what I know, ignoring the naysayers and detractors."

- (1) The narration here says that the "Hasanan" were trampled. This could mean Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), but this word could also mean "the big toes", indicating that the crowd was so dense they were stepping on each other's toes. Some have come to the conclusion that it indeed means Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), but Ibn Abil-Hadeed (The author of the renowned commentary on Nahjul-Balaghah, known as Sharh Nahjil-Balaghah) insisted that the second interpretation is more accurate.
- (2) Ibn Al-Atheer Al-Jazari, Abul-Hassan; Al-Kamil fil-Tareekh, V3, page 231: Al-Hassan told him (Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari): "Renounce our position, shame on you! Move from our pulpit!"
- (3) Ibn Al-Atheer Al-Jazari, Abul-Hassan; Al-Kamil fil-Tareekh, V3, page 260: Ali sent his son Al-Hassan and Ammar bin Yasir to gather the people.

was sent several questions by the Byzantine Empire, and was stumped by them. So he sent a few of his men to Kufa to ask Imam Ali (as) these questions under the guise of being Shia, then relay those answers to him as though they were his own. Imam Ali (as) transferred these questions to his son Al-Hassan (as), and he answered them all.⁽¹⁾

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- (1) Al-Saduq, Muhammad bin Ali bin Babawayh (d. 381 AH); Al-Khisal, page 454: My father has narrated to me, through Ali bin Ibrahim bin Hashim, through his father, through AbdulRahman bin Abi Najran, through Asim bin Hamid, through Muhammad bin Qais, that Imam Baqir (as) said: "While Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) was being welcomed by the people surrounding him, asking him for his decrees and judgments, a man stood up and said: 'Peace be upon you, Amir Al-Mu'mineen!' So Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) looked at him with those two magnificent eyes of his and said: 'And upon you be peace. Who are you?' The man said: 'I am one of your subjects, and among the townsfolk.' The Imam (as) said: 'You are neither one of my subjects, nor are you one of the townsfolk. If I had ever greeted you once before I would not have forgotten who you are,' The man said: 'Please grant me immunity, Amir Al-Mumineen!' So Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) asked him: 'Have you committed any crimes in my lands since you entered?' The man said 'no,' so the Imam (as): 'Are you a man of war?' The man said 'Yes.' So the Imam (as): 'Since it is now a time of truce, there shall be no problem.' The man said: 'I am a man that Muawiyah sent to you in disguise to ask you about something ibn Al-Asfar (The Byzantine King) sent to Muawiyah, saying: "If you truly are worthy of this position, and are the true successor after Muhammad (saw), then answer these questions I ask you. If you do, I will follow you and send you a prize!" But he did not have the answer, and that worried him. So he sent me to ask you about them.' Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) said: 'May Allah fight the son of the Liver-Eater (meaning Hind)! How lost and blind must he and his followers must be! By Allah, he freed his female slave, but was clueless as to how to marry her! May Allah rule between me and this nation; they abandoned my family, wasted my days, discarded my rights, belittled my status, and conspired against me! Bring me Al-Hassan, Al-Hussain, and Muhammad.' When they came, he said to the Syrian man: 'These two are the sons

Even before the Battle of Jamal, Al-Hassan (as) was his

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of the Holy Prophet (saw), and this is my son. Ask any of them you want! The Syrian man said: 'I will ask the one with long hair,' meaning Al-Hassan (as), who was young at the time. Al-Hassan said to the Syrian man: 'Ask me anything that you wish.'

The Syrian man asked: 'How much is between truth and falsehood? How much is between the sky and the Earth? How much is between East and West? What is a rainbow (in Arabic: Qaws Quzah)? What is the eye to which the nonbelievers' souls flock to? What is the eye to which the believers' souls flock to? What is an epicene? And what are ten things, each one stronger than the other?' Al-Hassan bin Ali (as) said: 'Between truth and falsehood is four fingers. What you see with your eyes is the truth, but you may hear much falsehood with your ears.' The Syrian man said: 'You are right.' Al-Hassan (as) continued: 'And between the sky and the Earth is the supplication of the oppressed, and his longing gaze. Do not believe anybody who tells you otherwise.' The Syrian man said: 'You are right, oh son of the Holy Prophet (saw)!' Al-Hassan continued: 'Between the East and West is a day's walk. You look at the sun at sunrise, then again at sunset.' The Syrian said: 'You are right. But what is a rainbow?' Al-Hassan (as) said: 'Woe to you! Do not call it "Qaws Quzah"! Quzah is a name for the Devil. Call it "Qaws Allah". It is a sign of fertility, and the safety of the people of Earth from flooding. As for the eye to which the nonbelievers' souls flock to, it is an eye called "Barhout", and the eye to which the believers' souls flock to is called "Salma". As for an epicene, it is a person who is unknown if they are (biologically) a male or a female. They should wait until they hit puberty. If they are male, they will experience ejaculation. If they are a female, they will experience menstruation, and their breasts will grow. If none of this happens, they are told to urinate in front of a wall. If the urine shoots out onto the wall, they are a male. If it gushes out like the urine of a camel, then they are a female. And as for the ten things, each of which is stronger than the other, the strongest thing Allah Almighty has created is the rock. Stronger than the rock is the metal that cuts the metal. And stronger than the metal is the fire which melts the metal. And stronger than the fire is the water that puts out the fire. And stronger than the water is the cloud that carries the water. And stronger than the cloud is the wind that carries the

father's spokesman, his speech eloquent and elaborate. And so when Abdullah bin Al-Zubair tried to stir the people against Imam Ali (as), the Imam (as) sent his son Al-Hassan (as) to speak to the people. Ibn A'tham Al-Kufi recounts in his book Al-Futooh that Abdullah bin Al-Zubair preached to the people of Basrah saying: "Ali bin Abi Talib is the one who killed Uthman bin Affan (!), and he has now come to swindle you, so avenge your caliph, protect your families, and fight for your honour".

When Imam Ali (as) was informed of this speech, he said: "He said that it was I who killed Uthman bin Affan, and he claimed that I aim to swindle you. I have been told he has even insulted me. Stand up, my son, and give the people an eloquent and brief speech, and do not insult anyone."

Al-Hassan (as) leapt up to his feet and addressed the people. He started by expressing gratitude and praise to Allah Almighty, then said: "O' people! We have been informed of Abdullah bin Zubair's statement and claims. As for the allegations that Ali

cloud. And stronger than the cloud is the angel that sends the wind. And stronger than that angel is the Angel of Death, who brings death to the angel. And stronger than the Angel of Death is death, which comes to the Angel of Death. And stronger than death is the will of Allah Almighty, which brings death to death.

The Syrian declared: 'I bear witness that you truly are the son of the Holy Prophet (saw), and that Ali (as) is worthier of this position than Muawiyah.' He then wrote these answers and sent them to Muawiyah, who sent them to Ibn Al-Asfar. Ibn Al-Asfar wrote back to him, saying: 'Muawiyah, why do you speak to me with words that are not your own, and answers that are not yours? I swear by Christ that these answers are not from you. These answer are only from a status of Prophethood. As for you, I would not give you a single dirham even if you asked or it.'

(as) killed Uthman, both the Muhajireen and Ansar know that his father Al-Zubair never ceased to accuse him of the most shameful of acts, all while Talha bin Ubaidullah had planted his flag in front of his treasury when he was still alive. And as for his insults towards Ali (as), that is something we will not cease to talk about if we start. And we could if we wished so. And as for accusing Ali (as) of deception and dishonesty, his own father Al-Zubair betrayed him on the pretence that he had sworn allegiance to him only with his hand, and not with his heart, yet that is an admission that he had, in fact, paid allegiance to him. And regarding the Kufi people's confrontation of the people of Basrah, that is to be expected from the people of the truth when encountering the people of falsehood. Indeed, we are not fighting the supporters of Uthman. And Ali (as) has the right to fight the supporters of Al-Jamal. Wal-Salam."

Following the speech, a man from the Ansar stood up and started to recite poetry that roughly translates to: "Benevolent Hassan, mirror of your father, you have risen among us as the greatest preacher."⁽¹⁾

Ibn A'tham reports that when the Battle of Jamal had ended, Imam Ali (as) sent the wife of Zaid bin Souhan and the wife of Abdullah bin Abbas to Aisha, who was in Basrah. They gave her a letter from Imam Ali (as) telling her to leave Basrah and return to Madinah. A few days later, he sent his son Al-Hassan (as) to tell her the same, and that was the catalyst that made her hasten her return to Madinah.⁽²⁾

(1) Al-Kufi, Ahmad bin A'tham (d. 314 AH); Al-Futooh, V2, page 200.

(2) Al-Kufi, Ahmad bin A'tham; Al-Futooh, V2, page 218.

And in the Battle of Siffeen, Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) were on the right flank of their father’s army⁽¹⁾. They were his eyes with which he sees, and just as he protected them, they would protect him, defending him with with their tremendous strength. Their fighting was so passionate and persistent⁽²⁾ that Imam Ali (as) called to his companions: “Contain these two for me, before they end the lineage of the Holy Prophet (saw)”. And yet, the two of them would immerse themselves in battle, quenching their swords in the blood of the enemies of Allah Almighty.⁽³⁾

Al-Hassan (as), the leader of his nation:

With the martyrdom of Amir Al-Mu’mineen (as), slain by a treacherous blow from AbdulRahman bin Muljam, Imam Hassan (as) assumed the role of leadership through a) the Holy Prophet (saw)’s declaration of “Al-Hassan and Al-Hussain

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- (1) Al-Kufi, Ahmad bin A’tham; Al-Futooh, V3, page 24: Ali bin Abi Talib (as) prepared his companions for battle. Leading the right flank cavalry was Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), the grandsons of the Holy Prophet (saw), and leading its infantry was Abdullah bin Jafar bin Abi Talib and Muslim bin Aqeel bin Abi Talib. At the head of his left flank cavalry was Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyyah..
 - (2) Al-Kufi, Ahmad bin A’tham; Al-Futooh, V3, page 299: Al-Hassan (as), Al-Hussain (as), and Muhammad, the sons of Ali (as), were with him when he attacked the left flank of the enemy, with arrows flying between his neck and shoulders, and his sons would shield him with their bodies.
 - (3) Al-Kufi, Ahmad bin A’tham; Al-Futooh, V3, page 136: Then came Al-Hassan (as), Al-Hussain (as), Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyyah, Abdullah bin Jafar, Muhammad bin Abi Bakr, and others from his household, with their swords drenched in blood.

are Imams”, b) Amir Al-Mu’mineen (as)’s mandate of his rule⁽¹⁾, and c) the fact that he was the worthiest and highest among the Muslims of his time, with the testimony of all his father’s followers in Kufa⁽²⁾. Imam Hassan (as) did not waste time in

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- (1) Al-Khazzaz Al-Qummi, Ali bin Muhammad (d. 300 AH); Kifayat Al-Athar, page 241, where he isolated an entire chapter for Imam Ali (as)’s mandates on the Imamate of Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as) including a narration Imam Ali (as) narrates from the Holy Prophet (saw), who says: “When I ascended to the sky, I looked at the legs of the Throne, and found written on it ‘There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is Allah’s messenger, and I have aided him with Ali, and supported him with Ali.’ I saw twelve lights, so I asked: ‘My Lord, who are these lights for?’ So I was called: ‘Oh Muhammad, these are the lights of the Imams from your progeny.’ I said: ‘Would you name them for me, Prophet of Allah?’ He said: ‘Yes. You are my successor, and the Imam after me. You will repay my debts and perform my duties. After you will be your sons Al-Hassan and Al-Hussain, and after Al-Hussain will be his son Ali Zan Al-Abideen, and after him his son Muhammad..’
- (2) Al-Yousufi Al-Gharawi, Muhammad Hadi; The Encyclopaedia of Islamic History, V5, page 453: When Adi bin Hatim Al-Ta’i saw the laxity of some in answering the call of Imam Hassan (as) to fight Muawiyah, he stood up and said: “I am the son of Hatim! Subhanallah! How horrible is this position we are in! Will you not answer your Imam?! The son of you Prophet’s daughter! Where are the Muslims?! Where are the preachers of Mudhar?! Where are the instigators from across the lands, tongues like pricks when calling to war, but when it becomes serious they evade it like foxes! Do you not fear the wrath of Allah?! The shame?! The disgrace?!” He then turned to the Imam (as) and said: “May Allah Almighty grant you your ambitions, and shield you from harm, and grant you success in pursuing all that is virtuous. We have heard what you said, and decided to be with you. We obey and follow your orders and wishes.” He then said: “I am going to the camp. Whoever wishes to follow me, follow me..” So Sa’d bin Ubadah Al-Ansari, and Ma’qal bin Qais Al-Riyahi, and Ziyad bin Khafsa Al-Taimi stood up and chastised the people and stirred them, then said to the Imam (as) what Adi bin Hatim said, accepting and answering

following his father's tactics for fighting Muawiyah, who broke the oath he made in Dawmat Al-Jundul after Siffin and its events. Muawiyah began sending troops to terrorise the followers of Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as), killing and ambushing them in the corners of the Islamic Empire. In fact, Imam Ali (as) was preparing another army to fight Muawiyah when he was martyred. And so Imam Hassan (as) continued on that route, preparing his troops, and assembling all those ready to fight in Nukhaylah (a military camp outside Kufa).

For certain reasons and circumstances, which we will further explore when talking about the Imam (as)'s treaty and the theories behind it, a truce was formed between Muawiyah and his supporters in Syria, and Imam Hassan (as) and Muslims in general. The most important terms of this truce were that rule was to go to Muawiyah on the condition that he was to rule under the law of the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (saw), and that he will not pursue the followers of Amir Al-Mu'mineen nor punish them for their association with him, and that the caliphate will pass to Imam Hassan (as) after him if he is alive, and otherwise to Al-Hussain (as), among several other terms.

The Peace treaty:

Despite the conflicting opinions on the peace treaty and its terms, it was clear that it was the best option for the Islamic

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his call. The Imam (as) said to them: "You have spoken the truth, may Allah bless you. I still know you in your good faith, your truth to your words, and your loyalty. May Allah reward you!"

nation in general, for the followers of Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) in particular, and for Imam Hassan (as) himself. And although it was advantageous to Muawiyah and his supporters on the short term, but on the long term that was not the case. Realising this caused Muawiyah to seriously consider eliminating Imam Hassan (as) entirely and assassinating him. Although Muawiyah was in no way an expert in combat, nor was he brave enough for direct confrontation, he was a specialist when it came to murder, treachery, and poisoning, something he'd done numerous times with his enemies, rivals, and even his own friends!⁽¹⁾

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- (1) He attempted, successfully, to poison Malik Al-Ashtar, who was one of his enemies (We will explore this incident in depth later). In fact, he went on to assassinate AbdulRahman bin Khaled bin Al-Waleed, who was one of his greatest allies! Ibn Asakir says in *The History of Damascus*, V16, page 164: "AbdulRahman bin Khaled bin Al-Waleed had gained a great deal of popularity in Syrian, and its people had started to like him. He had reminded them very much of his father Khalid bin Al-Waleed, and had secured them a lot of wealth in Byzantine lands. He had risen in power so much that even Muawiyah had begun to fear him, worried that people will side with him soon. He ordered Ibn Athal to kill him, and to be cunning with it. If he succeeded, he promised him that he will exempt him from paying taxes for as long as he lives, and that he would be assigned the tax collector of Homs. So when AbdulRahman arrived in Homs, having just come back from Byzantine lands, Ibn Athal presented him and some of his slaves with poisoned drinks, and they drank it and died. Muawiyah kept his promise, designating him as the tax collector of Homs, and exempt him of all his own taxes." He did the same to Sa'd bin Abi Waqas, even though Sa'd had resigned politics, and yet: "Muawiyah poisoned him (Imam Hassan (as)) when he wanted to name Yazid as his successor, and he poisoned Sa'd bin Abi Waqas too around the same time, and they both died within a few days of each other", as Abul-Faraj said in *Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen*, page 60.

So what stops him from doing so with Imam Hassan (as)? Religious obligations? A moral pledge? An oath or promise? All of these mean nothing to the likes of Muawiyah.

And that is what happened. The assassination was carried out by Ja'dah, the daughter of Al-Ash'ath bin Qais Al-Kindi. She was the wife of Imam Hassan (as), before poisoning in return for becoming Yazid's wife!⁽¹⁾

And so, after being goaded by these criminals, this double-crossing woman poisoned the Imam (as) in Safar, 50 AH, which ultimately ended with his martyrdom.⁽²⁾

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- (1) And just like Muawiyah had tricked others before, he'd also tricked her. He did not marry his son to her, and instead gave her a small amount of money. Al-Abbas bin Abdullah bin Al-Abbas married her later, according to Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra, V5, page 315.
 - (2) As stated by Ibn Sa'd in Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra, and Al-Balathari (d. 279 AH) in Ansab Al-Ashraf, V3, page 55: And it is said that Muawiyah urged Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais, the wife of Al-Hassan who hated him, and he encouraged her to poison him, and she did so. Abul-Faraj Al-Asbahani (d. 356 AH) says that too in Maqatil Al-Talibiyeen, V1, page 60: "Muawiyah poisoned him (Imam Hassan (as)) when he wanted to name Yazid as his successor, and he poisoned Sa'd bin Abi Waqas too around the same time, and they both died within a few days of each other. And the person responsible for it was Imam Hassan (as)'s wife, Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais, in return for some money granted to her by Muawiyah." Al-Mutahhar bin Tahir Al-Muqaddasi (d. c. 355 AH) also mentions this in Al-Bid'u wal-Tareekh, V6, page 5: "And others says that Muawiyah provoked Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais to poison Al-Hassan, in return for promising her marriage to Yazid. So she poisoned Al-Hassan and killed him, but Muawiyah said to her: 'Yazid means a lot to us. How could somebody who was not worthy of the son of the Prophet be worthy of him?'; and instead compensated her with a hundred thousand dirhams.' The same was stated by Ibn AbdulBarr (d. 463 AH) in Al-Istee'ab fi Ma'rifat Al-Ashab, V1, page 389: "Qatadah and Abu Bakr bin Hafs

Did Imam Hassan (as) take part in the Caliphs' conquests?

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said that Al-Hassan was poisoned, and that it was his wife Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais Al-Kindi. Others said that she was provoked by Muawiyah and his promised reward, but she did not gain much after it. Allah knows best." Ibn Abil-Hadeed also talks about it in *Sharh Nahjil-Balaghah*, V16, page 11: Abul-Hassan Al-Mada'ini said: "His death was in 49 AH, after an illness that lasted 40 days, and he was 47 years old. His wife Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais poisoned him on the order of Muawiyah. And he had promised her: "If you poison him, I will give you a hundred thousand dirhams, and marriage to my son Yazid!" But when she poisoned and killed Al-Hassan, he gave her the money, but did not marry her to Yazid. He told her: "What if you do to my son what you did to the son of the Holy Prophet (saw)?" In *Mir'aat Al-Zaman fi Tawareekh Al-Azman*, V7, page 125, Ibn Al-Jawzi (d. 654 AH) says: "Ibn Sa'd narrates that Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais poisoned him, where he says: 'Yahya bin Hammad narrated to me, through a chain of narrations, that Um Musa said that Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais poisoned the Imam (as). And he suffered so much that a bowl would be placed under him while another was being removed. This went on for 40 days. Abul-Yaqdhan and Al-Haytham bin Adi said: Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan sent a letter to Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qais: 'Poison Al-Hassan, and I will give you a hundred thousand dirhams, and you can marry Yazid', so she poisoned him. When he died, she sent to Muawiyah, demanding he keep his promise. So he sent her the money and a letter saying: 'As for Yazid, I like him alive.'" Jamal Al-Deen Al-Mizzi (d. 742 AH) says, in *Tahtheeb Al-Kamal fi Asma' Al-Rijal*, V6, page 253, that: "Muhammad bin Salam Al-Jamhi said, through Ibn Ja'dabah, that Ja'dah bint Al-Ash'ath bin Qaid was with Al-Hassan bin Ali. So Yazid sent to her saying: 'Poison Al-Hassan, and I am your husband' So she did, and when he died she sent to Yazid, asking him fulfilment of his promise. But he answered: 'We didn't want you with Al-Hassan. Would we want you for ourselves?'" And there are so many others that mention similar recounts.

It seems that the first to talk about this was Muhammad bin Jareer Al-Tabari in his historical recount. He says: "Umar bin Shabbah has informed me that he was told by Ali bin Muhammad, through Ali bin Mujahid, that Habash bin Malik said: Saeed bin Al-Aas set off from Kufa on conquest for 30 years, heading for Khurasan. Accompanying him was Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman and several of the Holy Prophet (saw)'s companions, along with Al-Hassan, Al-Hussain, Abdullah bin Al-Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-Aas, and Abdullah bin Al-Zubair..." Several other Sunni historians after him also said the same thing.

First of all, should this be true, we do not find it problematic nor contradictory to our beliefs. Some argue that that cannot be true because the leader of the army was Saeed bin Al-Aas, and how can Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) be subordinate to the likes of him? Or that the conquests were not conducted in a, strictly speaking, honourable way, at least in their beginnings. The first argument can be answered by the fact that, if it did happen, then it was with the approval of Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as), who was the Imam of their time, and was therefore justified and authorised, and was simply a case of prioritising one thing over another. The second issue can be refuted through arguing that their presence in the army, if proven, was for the purpose of regulating and amending the methods of conquest as much as possible. This is how the participation of some of Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as)'s followers in the conquests was justified, especially those who are least likely to do something out of their own accord and without the approval of their Imam. And there was quite a few of them. And so, when presented with two choices, complete corruption, or regulation as much

as possible, the second choice was the wiser option. This is especially considering that the conquests were not purely evil, rather they spread the word of Islam to distant communities, despite being interlaced with material gains and riddled with mistakes and transgressions.

We do not find a problem with this claim should it indeed be proven to be true. The problem, however, is that it is not supported by any evidence. In fact, there is evidence to the contrary, such as:

1. Ibn Al-Atheer, in his book *Al-Kamil*, refers to a dispute revolving around the conquest of Tabaristan, and whether it took place in 18 AH, in the time of Umar bin Al-Khattab, or whether it was in 30 AH during the time of Uthman bin Affan...

The same report also mentions that the army sent to Tabaristan came from Kufa. We know that Imam Hassan (as) was in Madinah in 30 AH, and did not move to Kufa until 36 AH, when he relocated there with his father after returning from the Battle of Jamal. Before that, there is no report that Imam Hassan (as) ever went to Kufa.

2. The relations between the Hashemites and Uthman bin Affan in these times were turbulent at best, clashing at worst. This year, the people of Kufa testified against Al-Waleed bin Uqba (Uthman's half-brother from his mother) and his alcohol addiction. They took the matter to the caliph, but he refused to punish him adequately despite the witnesses' testimonies. And so Imam Ali (as) took matters

into his own hands. He (or one of his household) punished Al-Waleed by flogging, despite Uthman's disapproval.

Also in this year, Abu Dhar Al-Ghafari was exiled to Al-Rabatha by the order of Uthman. And when he passed away there, Imam Ali (as), Al-Hassan (as), Al-Hussain (as), and some of their followers attended his funeral, even though the caliph prohibited it.

These times of high tension between the government and Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) meant that it was very unlikely that he would send his sons to fight in these conquests. It was him who said in the Battle of Jamal: "Contain these two for me, before they end the lineage of the Holy Prophet (saw)"; and that battle was for a righteous purpose and justified means, and under the flag of an infallible Imam. And yet he was still worried they would be killed, and the lineage of the Holy Prophet (saw) would be terminated. Is it likely that the Imam (as) would allow his sons to leave and fight under the command of Saeed bin Al-Aas, who is among those the Holy Prophet (saw) was talking about when he said: "When the progeny of Al-Aas reach thirty men, they will seize the wealth of Allah as personal earnings, and His servants as slaves..."? What with this being the time in which the caliph began blatantly colliding with the Imam (as)!

We also see Uthman complaining about Abdullah bin Abbas to his father, Al-Abbas bin AbdulMusalib, accusing him of riling up his enemies, and even conspiring against him. So how, in these circumstances, would he then go and fight in his conquests under his generals? The

aforementioned excerpt said that among the men who went on the conquest of Tabaristan was Abdullah bin Abbas.

3. A number of those in Ibn Al-Atheer's chain of narrators have been described as liars, fabricators, and fraudsters, as we mentioned previously in the footnotes. We also do not find this recount in any earlier sources, even though there is good reason for this information to be mentioned if it were true. After all, it is very important to the Sunni faith for them to prove that there was a good relationship and correlation between Imam Ali (as) and the caliphs in order to establish the legitimacy of their rule, to show that everybody was content with the way things were. And what better evidence than the participation of Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) in the caliphs' conquests? And yet, this claim has not been made except by Al-Tabari (d. 310 AH). We also do not find it in any biographies or Hadeeth books, Sunni or Shia, that talk about the lives of either Imam. We know that our books follow every stage and period of their lives. So how can an event so important not be mentioned at all, not even with a single line, in any Hadeeth, biographical, or historical source?!

Stranger than that is what is mentioned by AbdulRahman bin Khaldun, who isn't unknown to have odd reports, where he narrates that when Uthman bin Affan wanted to conquer Africa, he assigned Abdullah bin Sa'ad bin Abi Sarh (his foster brother) as the commander of the army setting out in 25 AH. He says: "Then Abdullah bin Abi Sarh asked for Uthman's approval and backing. Uthman

took counsel from the Sahaba, who gave him their advice. He prepared the army in Madinah, and among the troops were Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Ibn Amr bin Al-Aasi, Ibn Jaafar, Al-Hassan, Al-Hussain, and Ibn Al-Zubair, and they all set out with Abdullah bin Abi Sarh...” Almost as if Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as) had nothing better to do than wait for any random commander Uthman assigns, rush to his side, and march with him to the ends of the Earth.

However, Ibn Khaldun, the same person who, in the introduction of his book, ranted about all the historians who come up with things that have no source, no backing, and no proof, did not himself provide any sources for this. In fact, Ibn Al-Atheer, who came before him (d. 630 AH) and wrote Al-Kamil fil-Tareekh, did mention Uthman assigning Abdullah bin Abi Sarh, but he did not say that he took Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as)⁽¹⁾. And neither did Al-Masoudi (d. 346 AH) in Murooj Al-Thahab, nor did Al-Tabari (d. 310 AH) say so in

(1) However, it was in Al-Kamil fil-Tareekh, V3, page 109, where he says that Saeed bin Al-Aas took them with him to conquer Tabaristan (and that is what we pointed out was false, where some historians see that Al-Hassan and Al-Hussain (as) were nothing but soldiers serving under the Ministry of Defence, with nothing better to do, and nothing of importance to concern themselves with except waiting for the orders of the caliph for them to run to the ends of the Earth), even though Saeed bin Al-Aas had hostile relations with AhlulBayt (as). Even if with ignore that, we would find that this conquest was so full of injustice and cruelty that would be unacceptable to any Muslim, let alone Al-Hassan (as) and Al-Hussain (as), that it further invalidates the claim, as Ibn Al-Atheer says in Tamam Al-Khabar, page 110: “They surrounded them, so they asked for safety, and he gave an oath to not kill a single man. So when they opened the fort, they killed all of them except for a single man...”!

his history book. All he said was that “Uthman encouraged the people to participate in the conquest of Africa, and ten thousand men gathered from Quraysh, the Muhajireen, and Ansar,” even though it was him who said what he said about the conquest of Tabaristan, and we have already disproved that. So either Ibn Khaldun made a mistake, and said what Al-Tabari said, just in Africa instead of Tabaristan (even though he actually said it in both sections), which would be a dreadful form of negligence and lack of accuracy, or he purposefully added that himself, which is even more shameful and unforgiveable.