



A Brief Profile of Imam Hassan-e-Mujtabah^{asws}

On the fifteenth of the Holy month of Ramadhan, in the second year after Hijrah (migration), the first grandson of the Holy Prophet^{saww}, the first son of Imam Ali^{asws} and Lady Syeda^{asws}, and the third Imam of the followers of Ahlul Bait^{asws} descended onto earth from the heavens. The chief of Apostles^{saww}, the Imam of the devout^{asws}, and the Princess of all noble ladies^{asws}, greeted the news with submission, thanking Allah^{azwj} for the blessing they had been waiting for on the earth. The Holy Prophet^{saww} took the new arrival from the hands of his wife, Umme Salamah, and after kissing him^{asws} on the forehead, pressed him^{asws} to his^{saww} chest with tears of joy glittering in his eyes. The Holy Prophet^{saww} himself recited the 'Adhan' in the little one's^{asws} right ear and recited the 'Iqamah' in his^{asws} left ear. The Holy Prophet^{saww} asked Amir ul Momaneen^{asws}, if he^{asws} had named his son^{asws}? Amir ul Momaneen^{asws} replied: How could I precede you in naming him^{asws}? Nor would I, O my Lord^{azwj}, replied the Prophet^{saww} while looking up into the skies. The Holy Prophet^{saww}'s prayer was answered and Allah^{azwj}'s Message was delivered immediately, through angel Gabriel^{as}, to name the new arrival after the name of Prophet Aron^{as}'s first son, which was Shabber¹ but the name of Ali^{asws} and Syeda^{asws}'s first son to be al-Hassan (the most beautiful/praiseworthy).

There are numerous verses in the Holy Quran in praise of Imam Hussan^{asws} and Ahlul Bait^{asws}, (i.e. 1/3 of the Quran is revealed in praise of Ahlul Bait^{asws}), it is out of scope of our short profile to go into details of these verses, i.e. al-Muwada (42:23), Mubahila (3:61), Tatheer (33:33), Hal Ata (76:5-8).

There are also an equally large number of the Holy Prophet^{saww}'s traditions in praise of Imam Hassan^{asws}, out of which we will only quote a few:

Sayings of Prophet Mohammed^{saww}

1. The Holy Prophet^{saww} said: al-Hassan^{asws} and al-Hussain^{asws} are the princes of the youth of Paradise, and their father^{asws} is more glorious than the two of them.²
2. The Holy Prophet^{saww} said: 'These two grandsons of mine will be the Imams^{asws}, whether they are standing (actively involved) or sitting down (observing patience/Taqqiya)'.³
3. Rasool Allah^{saww} said: 'Allah^{azwj} will decorate His^{azwj} Court 'Al-Arsh' on the day of Assembly, using heavenly gifts, then He^{azwj} will ask to bring two Stages made out of 'al-Noor'⁴ each, 100 miles in length to be placed on the left and right sides of the 'al-Arsh'. Allah^{azwj} will, then, invite Imam Hassan^{asws} and Hussain^{asws} to take a seat on these Stages. Allah^{azwj} will decorate His^{azwj} 'al-Arsh' through these Elevated personalities, similar to a lady who would like to wear earrings for her make-up.⁵
4. Ibn Abbas narrates: 'The Prophet^{saww} was once carrying al-Hassan^{asws} on his shoulders. A man met him^{saww} and said: 'You^{asws} are riding on the best of the mounts, little boy^{asws}!' But the Prophet^{saww} retorted (him): 'And he^{asws} is the best of the riders'.⁶

¹ As Imam Ali^{asws} had the same relation and status to Prophet Mohammed^{saww} as Prophet Aron^{as} had to Prophet Moses^{as}, except there was no Prophet after Prophet Mohammed^{saww} (a famous tradition); in Hebrew language, its Arabic equivalent is Hassan.

² Bihar ul Anwar, vol. 10, pp. 236-390, (Urdu)

³ Bihar ul Anwar, vol. 10, pp. 236-390, (Urdu)

⁴ Divine Light

⁵ Amali-Sheikh Sadduq, pp 184, Bihar ul Anwar, vol 43, 293, Irshad al-Qalub, vol. 2, pp 141, al-Qatara, vol. 4, pp 47 (Urdu)

⁶ Al-Sawa' iq al-Muhriqa, p. 82, Hulyat al Awliya.

Sayings of Imam Hassan^{asws}:

1. You should clearly understand that you could never observe piety unless you recognise the charter of guidance. You would neither be able to hold fast to the covenant of the Book unless you identify those who have left it, nor would you be able to do justice to Book's true recitation unless you differentiate those who have made 'Tahreef' (changes) to it. If you are able to identify the innovations and favouritism (induced into religion), only then you can see lies which have been fabricated against Allah^{azwj}, and see how they are trapped who did fall into (worldly gains against bounties of the hereafter): An extract from one of Imam Hassan^{asws}'s sermons,⁷
2. Imam Hassan^{asws} said: 'there are twelve qualities in respect of having food. It is incumbent upon a Muslim to know them. Four of those are obligatory, four are recommended, and the last four are considered to be good manners. As for the obligatory qualities, these are: knowledge (source of food), satisfaction (being content with what one gets on the food mat), saying 'Bismillah...' and saying 'Alhamdo lillah' (after finishing food). As for the recommended ones, these are: to perform the ritual ablution before eating food, sitting on the left side, eating with three fingers, and licking the fingers. As for the moral ones, these are: eating from the food which is in front of you, chewing a small portion of it, chewing it well, and looking little at other people's faces while eating.'⁸
3. Once a man said to Imam Hassan^{asws}: 'O son of Allah's Apostle, I am one of your shias'. Imam^{asws} replied: 'O servant of Allah^{azwj}, if you obey our^{asws} commands and prohibitions, only then you are able to justify your statement. However, if your conduct is contrary to what you have claimed, then do not increase your sins through claiming a high position to which you are not entitled. Do not say that you are among our Shiaites; instead say that you are among those who support us^{asws}, show love for us^{asws}, and show enmity towards our enemies, and you are in good and will end up in good.'⁹
4. One remains with one's body in this world but with his heart being in the hereafter.
5. Promise is an illness for the generous, as he is enslaved by it until fulfilling it.
6. The wise do not cheat regardless of whoever consults them.¹⁰
7. An opportunity quickly passes but comes back slowly.
8. Missing something is better than requesting it from unworthy person.
9. Bad manners are worse than misfortune.
10. A close companion is he who is brought closer by affection even though he is far in one's lineage, whereas an outsider is that who is less affectionate even though he is closer in lineage.
11. If your heart (soul) does submit to what you like for it to do and repels your preference, then do not obey it when it comes up with a desire as per its liking.
12. Do not reply to him who starts speaking before greeting.
13. Do not burden your today with the worries of tomorrow.

⁷ Tuhaf al -Uqool, pp 53.

⁸ Abdullah Shubbar, Masabeeh al-Anwar fi Hal Mushkilat al-Akhbar, vol. 2, p. 271. pp253

⁹ Warm, Majjmu'a pp. 301, ibid

¹⁰ Warram, Majmu'a, pp. 201, ibid 257

14. Be aware! If you earn more than your needs, then you are treasurer of the others (the deserving ones).¹¹

Life of Imam Hassan^{asws}:

Imam Hassan^{asws} had grown up under the guidance and affection of his grandfather, the Prophet of Islam^{saww} but lost him^{saww} at the age of only eight years. He then spent about twenty-seven years under the Imamate of his father, Amir-ul-Momaneen Ali bin Abi Talib^{asws}. The latter period had been extremely difficult, during which the Imam^{asws}'s mother Syeda^{asws}, was martyred, properties of Ahlul Bait^{asws} were confiscated by the Muslim rulers and Imam Ali^{asws}'s Divine right to succeed the Holy Prophet^{saww} was not only usurped, but Amir-ul-Momaneen^{asws} was also arrested and subjected to harassment by the governing party. Imam Hassan^{asws} also saw fabrication of lies to Allah^{azwj}, squandering the rights and honour of Ahlul Bait^{asws} by the first three Muslim caliphs and their supporters as well Mua'wiyyah^{la} in such a harsh way that Ahlul Bait^{asws} never had a peaceful moment after the life of the Holy Prophet^{saww}.

Imam Hassan^{asws} also closely observed the short period of his father, Ali ibn Abi Talib^{asws}'s rule which only lasted for three years and nine months, during which Mua'wiyyah^{la} not only refused to accept Imam Ali^{asws}'s unanimous nomination, on the insistence of Muslims in Madinah, but also tried his best to instigate troubles and destabilise Imam Ali^{asws}'s rule. Amir-ul-Momaneen^{asws}, in response to Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s never ending trouble instigating exercises, had to transfer the capital of the Muslim state from Madinah to Kufa in order to keep a closer eye on the borders of Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s territories. As a result, there were several wars, including the famous war of 'Safeen' against Mua'wiyyah^{la} and 'Nahherwan' against a group of 'kharajis'¹² terrorists created by Mua'wiyyah^{la}. Imam Hassan^{asws} played an important supportive role during all this time. Imam Ali^{asws} was martyred while leading morning prayers on the 21st of Ramadhan through a lethal strike of 'Kharaji' Ibn-e-Muljim's poison-fused sword on the 19th of the month of Ramadhan.

Later on, Imam Hassan^{asws} was unanimously elected as the Caliph of Muslims in the 40th year of Hijra. At first the people of Koofa and Basra accepted him^{asws}, followed by those residing in the cities of Madinah and Makkah. However, the governor of Syria, Mua'wiyyah^{la}, who had never accepted the leadership of Imam Ali^{asws} previously, refused to accept Imam Hassan^{asws} as the Caliph of the Muslim nation.

Mua'wiyyah^{la} paid large sums to his agents in Kufa, who actively started to create unrest and turn public opinion into Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s favour with the intention of destabilising Imam^{asws}'s newly established government. After being informed of success by his agents, Mua'wiyyah^{la} came out from Shaam with a huge army to fight against Imam Hassan^{asws}. In response to his advances, Imam Hassan^{asws} gave an eloquent sermon in the Mosque of Kufa but Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s agents had already won people's opinion in favour of Mua'wiyyah^{la}, through bribery and lucrative promises. As a result, with the exception of a few devout followers, no one came forward to support Imam Hassan^{asws}'s appeal to join his army against Mua'wiyyah^{la}. The army Imam Hassan^{asws} managed to form, lacked loyalty and were more interested in worldly gains, which Mua'wiyyah^{la} was promising them, by offering 'Dinars' and a share in his new government, consequently, several ranks of Imam Hassan^{asws}'s soldiers and commanders defected to him^{asws} and joined Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s camp.

After introducing weakness in Imam Hassan^{asws}'s army, Mua'wiyyah^{la} proposed a treaty, which Imam Hassan^{asws} accepted by putting forward the following conditions, with the intention of avoiding unnecessary bloodshed of his^{asws} remaining few but devout followers. The conditions of

¹¹ Bihar ul Anwar, vol. 10, pp. 391, (Urdu)

¹² A group supported by Mua'wiyyah who refused to obey Imam Ali^{asws} and started a civil unrest.

the treaty, very briefly, were: 1. Mua'wiyyah^{la} will rule according to the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah, 2) He will stop harassing and torturing the people of Koofa (and those elsewhere) who were the followers of Ali^{asws}; 3) He will stop the cursing of Imam Ali^{asws} from the Pulpits; 4) He will not have the right to appoint a successor after him; the matter will be left to the Muslim community.

Mua'wiyyah^{la}, however, very soon after signing the treaty, not only violated its conditions but started reticulating its contents, for example, he said in the Mosque of Kufa: "By God, I have not fought against you to make you pray, nor to fast, nor to make you go to pilgrimage, nor to pay zakat. Indeed you do that anyway. I did fight against you so that I establish power over you and God has given me that, although you were reluctant to obey me. Surely, I have been requested by al-Hassan^{asws}, to give him things and I have given those to him^{asws}. But, all of those are now under my foot! And from now on I will not fulfil anything (I promised in the treaty)!".

The Reasons Behind the Treaty:

Imam Hassan^{asws} replied on various occasions when asked about the reasons in agreeing to the truce offered by Mua'wiyyah^{la} even though Imam^{asws} had undeniable proofs of his corruption and treachery. We will only present two extracts from Imam Hassan^{asws}'s replies: (1) 'The doctrine behind my truce is the same as Prophet Mohammed^{saww} had adopted when signing the treaty of 'Hudebia' with Bani Zammer and Bani Ashajja and people of Mecca, when they offered their conditions of peace. Although, those people were deniers of the 'Wahi' (Inspiration) as well as the Book, however, Mua'wiyyah^{la} and his associates are only deniers of its (Book) interpretation'. (2) 'By Allah^{azwj}, I had opted for a truce with Mua'wiyyah^{la}, on the conditions that he would not spill our blood, give immunity to our relatives and associates, it is certainly better than him assassinating us and completely destroying our^{asws} lineage and listen, it turned out to be in our favour that I did not respond to his antagonising assaults and a series of aggressive measures, otherwise my^{asws} own people (who were bribed by him) would have grabbed me from my^{asws} neck and handed me^{asws} over to Mua'wiyyah^{la}. By Allah^{azwj}, it is far better for me to secure a truce with him (on my^{asws} dictated conditions) than being presented to him as a prisoner of war, then he may have either killed me^{asws} or alternatively, spared my life as favour, hence Bani Hashim would have been eternally buried under his favour and his decedents would have kept on teasing us by mentioning his goodwill to our present and past generations.

Shortly afterwards, Imam Hassan^{asws}, left for Medina and resided there, facing and enduring Bani Ummaiyad^{la}'s antagonising propaganda and fabricated lies against Ahul Bait^{asws} in order to cause damage to their^{asws} Divinely Higher status. Imam Hassan^{asws} mostly stayed at home and submitted to the Will of Lord^{azwj}, until Mua'wiyyah^{la} had completed the ten years of his tyrannical rule.

Shahadat of Imam Hassan^{asws}:

Mua'wiyyah^{la}, after satisfying his evil desires and achieving his worldly goals through deceit and perjury, turned his attention to nominating his alcoholic, uncouth and wicked son, Yazeed^{la}, so that the empire built by him would be passed on to his descendents. He, however, knew it quite well that he will not achieve this as long as Imam Hassan^{asws} was alive, so he pondered on various schemes for a long time and then finally decided to assassinate Imam Hassan^{asws} by having him poisoned him^{asws}. He made several attempts to poison Imam^{asws}, but did not succeed as Imam Hassan^{asws} would recover from his attacks of his, through various assassins. It is reported in history that Imam Hassan^{asws} was poisoned more than 11 times but recovered after spending a few months in illness. Finally, Mua'wiyyah^{la} acquired a deadly poison from the Emperor of Rome after making a special request.¹³ Mua'wiyyah^{la}, then conspired through Jadah, one of the wives of Imam Hassan^{asws}, whose father (Al-Ashath) was his old and trusted ally. Concerning her, Imam Jafar-e-

¹³ Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 10, pp 173.

Sadiq^{asws} says: Surely, Al-Ashath took part in shedding the blood of Imam Ali^{asws}, his daughter Jadah^{la} poisoned al-Hassan^{asws} and his son^{la} took part in shedding the blood of al-Hussain^{asws}.¹⁴

Mua'wiyyah^{la}'s sister (Ummul Hakam^{la}) along with Marwan convinced Jadah to poison Imam Hassan^{asws}, after giving her one thousand Dirhams with a promise, to later, remarry her to Yazid^{la}. When Imam Hassan^{asws} came home to open his fast, at the end of a hot day, she mixed poison into yogurt. Imam Hassan^{asws} took a mouthful of it and suddenly felt the effect of excruciating pain, which started tearing and cutting apart Imam^{asws}'s stomach and liver. Upon feeling the bitter pain, Imam^{asws} said: 'To Allah^{azwj} we belong and to Him^{azwj} is our return! Praise belongs to Allah^{azwj}, (soon I shall be) embracing His Messenger^{saww}, the chiefs of Prophets^{saww}, my father^{asws}, the master of the Guardians^{asws}, my mother, the chief of the women of all worlds^{asws}, my uncle, Jafar al-Tayyar^{asws}, and Hamza^{asws}, the Master of Martyres'. Then Imam^{asws} turned to Jadah^{la} and said to her: 'O enemy of Allah^{azwj}, you have killed me! May Allah^{azwj} destroy you! by Allah^{azwj}, you will not get a guardian after me. He (Mua'wiyyah^{la}) has deceived and ridiculed you. May Allah^{azwj} disgrace you^{la} and him^{la}!¹⁵

Certainly, Allah^{azwj} disgraced her, although, Mua'wiyyah^{la} reluctantly received her in Sham but later told her that he would not marry his son to someone who had poisoned her kind husband! Various historians have recorded that when the news of Imam Hassan^{asws}'s assassination arrived in Damascus, Mua'wiyyah^{la} exclaimed with joy: 'Allah-u-Akbar' very loudly and rejoiced by dancing and waving his hands.

At that time, Imam Hassan^{asws} was forty-eight years of age. His succession (to the Imamate) had been for slightly over ten years. His brother and testamentary trustee (wasi), al-Hussain^{asws}, undertook the washing and shrouding of his body and started making arrangements for his^{asws} burial, as per his brother's will 'to bury me next to his grandmother, Fatima binte Asad^{asws}'s grave'. When the funeral procession was on its way to the Baq'ee cemetery where Fatima binte Asad is buried, Imam Hussain^{asws} stopped the coffin procession at the Prophet^{saww}'s shrine, as per will of Imam Hassan^{asws} to say goodbye to his beloved grandfather^{saww}. A'isha, a surviving wife of the Prophet^{asws}, who had been following the procession with hidden animosity and disguise against the family of Prophet^{saww} came out and shouted to stop!

She immediately intervened by saying that she would not allow Hassan^{asws}'s body to touch the grave of Prophet^{saww}, as she^{la} lives there. Suddenly, several of her supporters also turned up under the command of Marwan^{la}. There were words exchanged between her supporters and Muhammad Hanafiyya^{as}, another son of Imam Ali^{asws}. In the meantime, A'isha came out riding a donkey, as she did in the battle of Camel and gave a signal of 'attack' to Marwan^{la}, who in turn asked his archers to shoot arrows at the procession. Numerous arrows were lodged in Imam Hassan^{asws}'s coffin and the colour of the white shroud turned red. At this stage, Imam Hussain^{asws} quickly intervened, and took injured coffin back to houses of Ahlul Bait^{asws}, there arrows were taken out by Imam Hassan's sisters, Zainub-o-Qulsoom, under sobs and cries and a new shroud was prepared for burial and the coffin was then taken straight to Baq'ee. However, Bani Ummaid^{la}'s raging fire of animosity against Ahlul Bait^{asws} was not extinguished here, they continued, their major onslaught was few years later, this time in Karabala, when the army of Yazid surrounded Bani Hashim^{asws} in 61 Hijri. When Imam Hassan^{asws}'s little son, Al-Qasim came out in defence of his uncle al-Hussain^{asws}, they surrounded him^{asws} from all directions and after bringing him^{asws} down, they started cutting and stampeding his body under the feet of their horses, thereby, dividing little Qasim into several hundred pieces. Imam Hussain^{asws} collected parts of Qasim, one by one, while remembering those red and blue pearls of his^{asws} brother's liver which he gathered when Qasim^{asws}'s father by poisoned by the Umayyad^{la}.

¹⁴ A'Yan al-Shia, vol. 4, pp. 78.

¹⁵ Tuhaf al Uqool, pp. 391.