Imam Hasan (A.S.): The Saviour of Islam

This is) an account of the Imam Hasan(A.S.) after the Commander of the Faithful(A.S.), the) date of his birth, the evidence for his Imamates the period of his succession, the time of his death, and the place of his grave. (It also provides) a brief outline of the reports about him. The Imam after the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was his son al-Hasan, the son of the leader of the women of the worlds, Fatima, daughter of Muhammad, the Lord of messengers, may God bless him and his pure family.

Birth

(Al-Hasan's) kunya was Abu Muhammad. He was born in Medina, on the night of the middle day of the month of Ramadan, three years after the hijra (624). His mother, Fatima, peace be on her, brought him to the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, on the seventh day in a silken shawl from Heaven, which Gabriel had brought down to the Prophet, may God bless him and his family. He named him Hasan and sacrificed a ram for him (in the ceremony of aqiqa).

The Most Similar Person to the Holy Prophet of Islam(S.A.W.)

[It is reported by a group (of authorities), including Ahmad b. Salih. al-Tamimi on the authority of Abd Allah b. Isa, on the authority of Jafar al-Sadiq b. Muhammad, peace be on him;] Al-Hasan, peace be on him, was the most similar person to the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, in form, manner and nobility.

[It is reported by a group (of authorities), including Ma'mar, on the authority of al-Zuhri, on the authority of Anas b. Malik, who said:] No one was more like the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, than al-Hasan b. Ali, peace be on them. [Ibrahim b. Ali al-Rafi'i reported on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandmother Zaynab, daughter of Abu Rafi' - and Shabib b. Abi Rafi' al-Rafi'i on the authority of those who told him - she said:] Fatima, peace be on her, brought her two sons, al-Hasan and al- Husayn, peace be on them, to the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, at the time when he was suffering from the sickness from which he died. "Apostle of God," she said, "these are your two (grand) sons. Give them something as an inheritance." "As for al-Hasan," he replied, "he has my form and my nobility. As for al-Husayn, he has my generosity and my bravery."

The Second Holy Imam

Al-Hasan b. Ali, peace be on him, was the testamentary trustee (wasi) of the Commander of

the faithful, peace be on him, over his family, his children and his followers. He bequeathed him to look after his position and (the position of) his taxes (sadaqat) and he wrote him a covenant (of succession) which is well-known. His testamentary trusteeship is obvious in terms of the outlines of religion, the essential characteristic of wisdom and good-breeding. A great number of scholars have reported this trusteeship and many of the men of understanding have realised the truth of this through his (attitude to) the world.

Al-Hasan's Succession to the Caliphate and his Abdication

When the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, died, al- Hasan addressed the people. He reminded them of his right (to authority). The followers of his father pledged allegiance to him in terms of fighting those he fought and making peace with those with whom he made peace. [Abu Mikhnaf Lut b. Yahya al-Azdi reported: Ashath b. Suwar told me on the authority of Abu Ishaq al-Sabi'i and others, who said;]

Al-Hasan b. Ali, peace be on them, addressed the people towards dawn on the night in which the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, died. He praised and glorified God and blessed the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family. Then he said: There has died tonight a man who was the first among the early (Muslims) in (good) actions. Nor did any later (Muslims) attain his level in (good) actions. He used to fight alongside the Apostle of God, may Allah bless him and his family, and protect him with his own life. The Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, used to send him forward with his standard while Gabriel supported him on his right and Michael supported him on his left. He would not return until God brought victory through his hands. He, peace be on him, has died on this the night on which Jesus, son of Mary, was taken up (to Heaven), on which Joshua, son of Nuh, the testamentary trustee (wasi) of Moses, peace be on him, died. He has left behind him no gold and silver except seven hundred dirhams of his stipend (ata'), with which he was intending to buy a servant for his family.

Then tears overcame him and he wept and the people wept with him. Then he continued: I am the (grand) son of the one who brought the good news. I am the (grand) son of the warner. I am the (grand) son of the man who, with God's permission, summoned (the people) to God. I am the (grand) son of the light which shone out (to the world) . I am of the House, from whom God has sent away abomination and whom God has purified thoroughly. I am of the House for whom God has required love in his Book, when God, the Most High, said: Say: I do not ask you for any reward except love for (my) kin. Whoever earns good, will increase good for himself [XXXIII 33]. The good is love for us, the House. Then he sat down. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas, may

God have mercy on him, arose in front of him and said: People, this is the son of your Prophet, the testamentary trustee (wasi) of your Imam. So pledge allegiance to him.

The people answered him saying: No one is more loved by us nor has anyone more right to succession (khilafa). They rushed forward to pledge allegiance to him as successor. That was on Friday on the eleventh of the month of Ramadan in the year 40 A.H. (660). Then he assigned (the posts of) the tax collectors and he gave instructions to the governors (of the provinces). He sent Abd Allah b. al-Abbas to Basra. He took charge of all the matters. When Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan learnt of the death of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and the people's pledge of allegiance to his son, al-Hasan, peace be on him, he sent a man of secretly to Kufa and a man from Banu al-Qayn to Basra. They were to write reports to him to undermine affairs for al-Hasan, peace be on him. Al-Hasan, peace be on him, learned of that. He ordered the Himyari to be brought out from among (the tribe) of Lakhm in Kufa. He had him brought out and executed.

(Al-Hasan) wrote to al-Basra, ordering the Qayni to be brought out from among the Banu Sulaym. He was brought out and executed. Then al-Hasan, peace be on him, wrote to Muawiya: You sent men to use deception and to carry out assassinations and you sent out spies as if you want to meet (in battle). That is something which will soon happen so wait for it, if God wills. I have learnt that you have become haughty in a way that no wise man would become haughty. In that you are just as al-Awwal described: Say to him who desires the contrary of the one who has died: Prepare for another like him, as if (from the same) root. I and the one among us who has died are like the one who goes in the evening so that (the other) may come in the morning. Muawiya replied to him with his letter, which there is no need to mention.

There followed between him and al-Hasan, peace be on him, correspondences messages and disputes regarding the right of al- Hasan, peace be on him, to authority and the unlawful seizure of power of those who came before his father, peace be on him, and of Mu'awiya's attempt to strip the nephew of the Apostle of God, may God bless him anel his family, from his authority and of their (the House's) right to it apart from them. (All these) matters would take too long to describe. Muawiya set off towards Iraq. When he reached the bridge of Manbij, al-Hasan, peace be on him, reacted. He sent Hujr b. Adi to order the leaders of Amman to set out and to call the people together for war.

They were slow to (answer) him and then they came forward. (Al- Hasan) had a mixed band of men: some of them belonged to his Sh'ia and to his father's: some of them were members of the Muhakimma (i.e. Kharijites) who were influenced by (the desire of) fighting Muawiya with

every means (possible); some of them were men who loved discords and were anxious for booty; some of them were doubters; others were tribal supporters who followed the leaders of their tribes without reference to religion. He set off until he came to Hammam Umar, then he went on to Dayr Kab. He stopped at Sabat, just before the bridge and spent the night there. In the morning, he, peace be on him, wanted to test his followers and make their situation clear with regard to obedience to him, so that in that way he might be able to distinguish his friends from his enemies and be in a clear mind (about his position) to meet Mu'awiya and the Syrians.

He ordered the call to be made:

The prayer is a general one (which all should attend) (al-salat jamia). They gathered and he went up on the pulpit and addressed them. He said: Praise belongs to God whenever a man praises Him. I testify that there is no god but God whenever a man testifies to Him. I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His apostle whom He sent with the truth and whom He entrusted with revelation, may God bless him and his family. By God, I hope that I shall always be with God's praise and kindness. I am the sincerest of God's creatures in giving advice to them. I have not become one who bears malice to any Muslims nor one who wishes evil or misfortune tor him. Indeed what you dislike about unity (jama'a) is better for you than what you like about division. I see what is better for you better than you see for yourselves. Therefore do not oppose my commands and do not reject my judgement. May God forgive both me and you and may He guide me and you to that in which there is love and satisfaction. [He reported:] The people began to look at one another and asked each other, "What do you think he intends by what he has just said? "We think that he intends to make peace with Muawiya and hand over the authority to him" they answered. "By Gods the man has become an unbelievers they declared and they rushed towards his tent. They plundered him to the extent that they even took his prayer mat from under him. Then Abd al- Rahman b. Abd Allah b. Ja'al al-Azdi set on him and stripped his silk cloak from his shoulder. He remained sitting, still girt with his sword but without his cloak. He called for his horse and mounted it. Groups of his close associates and his Shia surrounded him and kept those who wanted (to attack) him away from him. He said:

Summon (the tribes of) Rabia and Hamdan to me. They were summoned to him and they surrounded him and defended him, peace be on him, from the people. A mixed group of others went with him (as well). When he was passing through the narrow pass of Sabat, a man of Banu Asad called al-Jarrah b. Sinan caught hold of the reins of his mule. He had an axe in his hand. He cried: God is greater (Allaku akbar)! You have become a polytheist, Hasan, just like your father became a polytheist before. Then he stabbed him in the thigh. It penetrated right

through to the bone. He seized (al-Hasan) by the neck and they both fell to the ground. A man from al-Hasan's Shi'a called Abd Allah b. Khatal al- Tai; pulled the axe away from his hand and struck him with it in the stomach. Another man called Zubyan b. Umara attacked him, struck him upon the nose and killed him. Another man who had been with (al-Jarrah) was caught and killed.

Al-Hasan, peace be on him, was carried on a stretcher to al- Mada'in where he was lodged with Sa'd b. Masud al-Thaqafi. The latter was the governor of (Ali), the commander of the faithful, peace be on him, there and al-Hasan had confirmed him in that position. Al-Hasan, peace be on him, was distracted by his own (discomfort) and with treating his wound. (In the meantime) a group of the tribal leaders wrote secretly to Mu'awiya offering to accept his authority (lit. to listen and obey). They urged him to come to them and they guaranteed to hand over al-Hasan, peace be on him, when they got to his camp, or to kill him treacherously.

Al-Hasan, peace be on him, learnt of that when a letter came to him from Qays b. Sa'd, may God be pleased with him. He had sent Qays with Ubayd Allah b. Abbas (to go on ahead) when he had set out from Kufa to meet Muawiya and to drive him out of Iraq, and make himself a commander of a unified people (jama'a). He had said to Ubayd Allah: If you are struck down, then the commander will be Qays b. Sad. Qays b. Sad's letter arrived informing him that they had stopped Muawiya at a village called al-Habubiyya opposite Maskan. Then Muawiya had sent to Ubayd Allah b. Abbas, urging him to come to him and offering him a million dirhams, half of which he would give him immediately, and the other half on his entry into Kufa. Ubayd Allah had slipped away in the night with his close associates to (join) Muawiya's camp. In the morning the people found their leader missing. Qays b. Sa'd, may God be pleased with him, said the prayer with them and took charge of their affairs. Al-Hasan's awareness of the people's desertion of him increased, (as did his awareness) of the corrupt intention of the Muhakkima (the Kharijites) against him, which they made obvious by cursing him, accusing him of disbelief, and declaring that it was lawful to shed his blood and plunder his property. There remained no one to protect him from his unfortunate predicament except the close associates from his father's Shia and his own Shia, and they were a group which could not resist the Syrian soldiers. Muawiya wrote to him about a truce and peace treaty. He also sent him the letters of his followers in which they had guaranteed to kill him treacherously or to hand him over.

He offered him as many conditions as he wanted, to answer his (call) for peace and he gave his (sworn) covenant by whose fulfilment everybody's interests would be served. Al-Hasan, peace be on him, did not trust him. He was aware of his deception and his attempts at

assassination. However he could find no escape from assenting to his demands to abandon the war and bring about a truce because of the weakness of his followers' understanding of his right, their corrupt attitude towards him and their opposition to him. (In addition, he was aware) of the view of many of them in declaring it lawful to shed his blood and to hand him over to his rival. (He also knew) of his cousin's desertion (of him) and his joining his enemy, as well as the inclination of the people towards the immediate present and their reluctance (to show concern) for the future. Therefore he, peace be on him, bound himself (in a treaty) with Muawiya as a result of the confirmation of the proof (of his situation) and with the excuses before God, the Most High, and all the Muslims, of what had taken place among them. He stipulated: That the cursing of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, should be abandoned and the practice of using the personal prayer (qunut) in the formal prayer (salat) (as prayer) against him should be set aside; That his Shia, may God be pleased with them, should be given security and that none of them should be exposed to any evil; That each of them who had certain rights should attain those rights. Muawiya accepted all that and made a treaty with him to observe that. He swore to him that he would fulfil it. When the truce had been concluded, Muawiya went on until he reached al-Nukhayla.

That was on a Friday; he prayed the mid-morning prayer (duha al nahar) with the people, and he addressed them. In his address, he Said By God, I have not fought against you to make you pray, nor to fast, nor to make the pilgrimage, nor to pay zakat. Indeed you do that (already). I fought so that I might have power over you and God has given that to me when you were reluctant to (obey) Him. Indeed I have been requested by al-Hasan, peace be on him, (to give him) things and I have given things to him. All of them are now under my foot. And from now on I will not fulfil anything. Then he went on until he entered Kufa. He resided there for several days. When the pledge of allegiance by its inhabitants had to be carried out, he went up on the pulpit and addressed the people. He mentioned the commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and that he had taken from him and from al-Hasan, peace be on him, what he had taken. Al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them, were present.

Al- Husayn, peace be on him, rose to reply but al-Hasan, peace be on him, took him by the hand and made him sit down. Then he, himself, (al-Hasan) arose and spoke: O you who mention Ali, I am al-Hasan and Ali was my father. You are Muawiya and your father was Sakhr (Abu Sufyan). My mother was Fatima and your mother was Hind. My grand father was the Apostle of God and your grandfather was Harb. My grandmother was Khadija and your grandmother was Futayla. May God curse him who tries to reduce our reputation and to diminish our nobility, who does evil against our antiquity and yet who has been ahead of us in

unbelief and hypocrisy. Groups of the people in the mosque shouted out: "Amen, Amen" When the peace between al-Hasan, peace be on him, and Muawiya was concluded in the way we have mentioned, al-Hasan, peace be on him, left for Medina.

Holy Imam's Martyrdom

He resided there, restraining his anger, staying close to his house, and awaiting the command of his Lord, the Mighty and High, until Muawiya had completed ten years of his administration. (Then) the latter decided to have the pledge of allegiance given to his son, Yazid, (as his successor). He communicated secretly with Ju'da, daughter of al-Ash'ath b. Qays- she was the wife of al-Hasan, peace be on him - to urge her to poison him. He gave an undertaking to her that he would marry her to his son, Yazid, and he sent her a hundred thousand dirhams. Juda gave him the poison to drink but he lingered on sick for forty days. He passed along his (final) road in the month of Safar in the year 50 A. H. (670). At that time, he was forty-eight years of age. His succession (to the Imamate) had been for ten years. His brother and testamentary trustee (wasp), al-Husayn, peace be on him, undertook the washing and shrouding of his body, and buried him with his grand mother, Fatima, daughter of Asad b. Hashim b. Abd Manaf, may God be pleased with her, in (the cemetery) of al Baqi.

Reports of the Cause of the Death of al-Hasan, Peace be on him, and of Mu'awiya Poisoning him, the Story of his Burial and the Actions and Statements Concerning that. [Isa b. Mihran reported: Ubayd Allah b. al-Sabb'ah told us: Jarir told us on the authority of Mughira, who said:] Muawiya sent to Juda daughter of al-Ashath b. Qays: I will arrange for you to marry my son, Yazid, on condition that you poison al-Hasan. He also, sent her a hundred thousand dirhams. She did that: she poisoned al-Hasan, peace be on him. (Mu'awiya) gave her the money but did not marry her to Yazid. Instead he gave her a man from the family of Talha as a substitute. The latter gave her children. Whenever any argument occurred between them and the clans of Quraysh, they would revile them saying: Sons of a woman who poisons her husbands.

[Isa b. Mihran reported: 'Uthman b. Umar told me Ibn Awn told us on the authority ot 'Umar b. Ishaq, who said.] I was with al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them, in the house. Al-Hasan, peace be on him, came in from outside and then went out again. He said: I have been given poison to drink several times but I have never been given poison like this. A bit of my liver has come out of my mouth and I began to turn it over with a stick I had. Who gave you the poison to drink, al-Husayn, peace be on him, asked him, and what do you want for him? Do you want him killed? If he may remain as he is, then God will be more terrible in His vengeance than you. It he may not remain as he is, then I should like to be free of any blame.

[Abd Allah b. Ibrahim reported on the authority of Ziyad al- Makhariqi, who said:] When death was close to al-Hasan, peace he on him, he summoned al-Husayn, peace be on him, and said. My brother, I am leaving you and joining my Lord. I have been given poison to drink and have spewed my liver into a basin. I am aware of the person who poisoned me and from where I have been made a subject to this deceitful action. I will oppose him before God, the Mighty and High. Therefore by the right I have with regard to you, say nothing about that and wait for what God, the Mighty and High, will decide concerning me. When I have died, shut my eyes, wash me and shroud me.

Then carry me on my bier to the grave of my grandfather, the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, so that I may renew my covenant with him. After that take me to the grave of my grandmother, Fatima daughter of Asad, may God be pleased with her, and bury me ther. My brother, the people will think that you intend to bury me with the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family. For that reason, they will gather to prevent you from doing it. I swear by God that you should not shed even your blood into the cupping-glass in (carrying out) my command. Then he made his testamentary bequests to his family and his children. (He gave him) his heirlooms and the things which the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, had bequeathed to him when he had made him his successor, had declared him worthy to occupy his position, and had indicated to his Shia that he was his successor, and set him up as their sign-post after himself. When he passed on his (final) journey, al-Husayn, peace be on him, washed and shrouded his (body). Then he carried him on his bier. Marwan and those of the Banu Umayya who were with him had no doubt that they would try to bury him beside the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family. They gathered together and armed themselves. When al-Husayn, peace be on him, approached the tomb of the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, with (the body of al-Hasan) so that he might renew his covenant with him, they came towards them with their group.

'A'isha had joined them on a mule and she was saying: What is there between you and me that you should allow someone I don't want to, to enter my house? Marwan began to recite: O Lord, battle is better than ease. (Then he went on:) Should Uthman be buried in the outskirts of Medina and al-Hasan be buried alongside the Prophet, may God bless him and his family? That will never be while I carry a sword. Discord was about to occur between the Banu Umayya and the Banu Hashim. Ibn 'Abbas hurried to Marwan and said to him; Go back to where you came from, Marwan. Indeed we do not intend to bury our companion with the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family.

But we want him to be able to renew his covenant with him by visiting him. Then we will take

him back to his grandmother, Fatima, and bury him alongside her according to his last instructions concerning that. If he had enjoined that he should be buried alongside the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, you know that you would be the least able to deter us from that. However, he, peace be on him, was much too aware of God and His Apostle and the sacredness of his tomb to bring bloodshed to it as others have done (who) have entered it without his permission. Then he went to A'isha and said to her: What mischief you bring about, one day on a mule and one day on a camel! Do you want to extinguish the light of God and fight the friends (awliya') of God? Go Back ! You have been given assurance against what you fear and have learned what you wanted (to know). By God, victory will come to this House, even if it is after some time.

Al-Husayn, peace be on him, said: By God, if there had been no injunction to me from al-Hasan, peace be on him, to prevent bloodshed and that I should not even pour blood into a cupping-glass in (carrying out) his command, you would have known how the swords of God would have taken their toll from you, you have broken the agreement which was made between you and us, you have ignored the conditions which we made with him for ourselves. Then they went on with (the body of) al-Hasan, peace be on him, and they buried him in (the cemetery of) al-Baqi' beside his grandmother, Fatima daughter of Asad b. Hashim b. 'Abd Manaf, may God be pleased with her.

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