

مِکِکِ BEDTIME STORIES

IMAM HASAN IBN ALI



IMAM HASAN (A.S.)

Imam Hasan (a.s.), our second Imam was the eldest grandson of the Holy Prophet and the son of Sayyida Fatimah (s.a.) and Imam Ali (a.s.). He was born on 15th Ramazan in the 3rd *hijra* in Madina. His name was chosen by Allah. His *kuniyat* (title) was Aba Muhammad and Mujtaba. Imam Hasan (a.s.) was also known as *shabbar* meaning handsome. He resembled his grandfather. Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) are the youths of paradise (*jawanan-e-jannat*).

When he was born Sayyida Fatimah (s.a.) took him to the Holy Prophet wrapped in a silken green shawl that had been sent by Allah. The Holy Prophet took him in his lap and recited the *azan* in his right ear and the *iqamah* in his left ear and sacrificed a ram in accordance with the rites of *aqiqa*.

The Holy Prophet was extremely fond of his grandson and said ‘whoever loves him loves

me and whoever loves me loves Allah, whoever hates him hates me and Allah also hates him.' He said Sayyida Fatimah (s.a.), Imam Ali (a.s.), Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) are his Ahlul Bayt, so till he was eight years old he lived under the loving care of his grandfather and his parents.

From childhood he had heard verses of the Holy Quran. He knew when and why and to whom each verse of the Holy Quran was revealed. He received the best education and grew up in the noblest of homes. He looked like his grandfather and also reflected the Prophet's genius and spirit. From his father he inherited the qualities of a jurist, a scholar, a teacher, a warrior and a true friend.

Even though he was just a child, the Holy Prophet took Hasan (a.s.) with him everywhere he went. Often the child would relate to his mother all that he had seen and heard that day including the *khutba* (sermon) of the Holy Prophet and the verses of the Holy Quran that had been revealed to him that day.

Once the two children, Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.) saw an Arab performing ablution (*wuzu*) incorrectly. They said to him: “O Shaykh! You are old and experienced, please watch us performing *wuzu* and tell us if we are doing it correctly.”

The Arab closely followed their ablutions and noticed his own mistake. Impressed by their politeness and discretion he said: “O boys! Both of you have performed the *wuzu* correctly. It was I who was wrong. Tell me who are you?”

They told him that they were the grandsons of the Holy Prophet.

During the battle of Siffin Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) had penetrated deep into the enemy ranks. Imam Ali (a.s.) grew very concerned. He asked his son, Muhammad Hanafiyyah, to make his way to them and assist them to come out safely. Muhammad Hanafiyyah, although himself a famous brave warrior, saw the danger in the situation and

delayed his action. The two sons of Sayyida Fatimah (s.a.) continued to stand their ground till Imam Ali (a.s.) himself dispersed the concentration of the enemy soldiers. After their safe return Imam Ali (a.s.) told his companions: "I do not like to expose these two to danger lest their demise cut off the Prophet's line of descent."

Once Imam Hasan (a.s.) was passing a street. Suddenly a Syrian appeared and started abusing him. The Imam heard him quietly. After the Syrian had his say, the Imam, with a cheerful smile, looked at him, saluted and said: "You are a stranger in this town. I shall be glad to do any service that may make you happy. If you are in need of a horse, or clothes, or food, I shall provide the best for you. If you are poor, I shall make you rich. Stay with me. Be my guest. It is good for you, because I have a spacious house and all necessary provisions."

The Syrian felt ashamed and began to cry. Amidst sobs he declared: "I give witness that you are the representative of

Allah, on this earth. Only Allah knew in which family nabuwwat and imamat be placed!”

On one occasion, after maghrib prayers, when all the faithfuls had gone to their homes, an old man, a stranger in the town approached Ali (a.s.) and asked if he had something to eat. Imam Ali (a.s.) had two loaves of bread. The old man touched the bread and said:
“How can you eat such hard bread?”

Ali (a.s.) dipped the bread into water and began chewing it and then gave the old man the address of a house where he could get as much as he liked of hot, delicious and fresh food. When the old man got to the house, he saw a large number of people eating a sumptuous feast. The host welcomed him and asked him to join the others. He found the meal to be exactly as described by the man in the *masjid*. After fully satisfying his hunger, he thanked the host, and asked, “Who are you? Who was the man who gave me your address? Why did he not come here for food rather than eating hard,

dry bread?” The host replied:

“I am Hasan. The man who gave you this address is my father, Ali ibna abi Talib. We eat simple food but serve the best to our guests.”

Imam Hasan (a.s.) welcomed the needy not just of Madina, but also of the surrounding areas. They would be taken care of and fed wholesome meals. The Imam was a gracious host to visiting traders, rich and wealthy shaykhs and travellers.

Once at the camp at Ras al-Hadd, a banquet was arranged by Imam Hasan (a.s.) for shaykhs and rich chiefs. A servant carrying a valuable dish slipped against the tent rope. The dish shattered into many pieces. The guests shouted at the servant and advanced to strike him. The Imam stopped them. The boy cried:

“My Lord! It is written (in the book of Allah), ‘Paradise is for them that check their wrath.’” “It is written so,” Imam Hasan (a.s.) said.

“My Lord! It is also written ‘Pardon the trespassers.’” Imam Hasan a.s. replied: “It is written, I forgive you.”

“Now is the blessing of the most high Allah is on you, dear master!” Cried the happy servant, “for He (it is written) loves the beneficent.”

“Yes! Thank you,” said Imam Hasan (a.s.) “One noble verse fetched from the Holy Quran is more precious than gold and crystal brought from Yemen’s hills. O Shaykh! He has broken the dish, but mended his fault with wisdom. (To the boy he said) I give you freedom, and the purse to buy the robe and turban of a freed Muslim.”

An emissary of the Byzantine empire was commissioned to go to Muslim Arabia and ask the following questions:

- i) What is the distance between right (credible) and wrong (incredible)?
- ii) How much is the space between earth and the sky?
- iii) What is the distance between the east and the west?
- iv) What is a rainbow?
- v) What is a neuter gender?
- vi) Which are those ten things that one is

harder (dominates or overpowers) than the other?

After crossing over into Syria the emissary directly went to Damascus and met Muawiyah. He advised him to refer these questions to Imam Ali (a.s.) who was at that time in Raja, with Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.). The emissary reached Raja and met Imam Ali (a.s.) for obtaining answers to the questions mentioned above. Imam Ali (a.s.) told him to get the answers from any one of his sons standing before him. The emissary turned to Imam Hasan (a.s.), who said:

“The distance between right (credible) and wrong (incredible, hearsay) is four fingers, held vertical. Eyes and ears are four fingers apart. What one sees is credible, and what one hears requires verification. (i)

The space between the earth and the sky is that which the vision and the cry of an oppressed person travel when he looks upwards. (ii)

The distance between the east and the west is the journey of the sun in one day. (iii)

Rainbow is a sign of plenitude in subsistence for the mankind, and security from being drowned in deluge. It is a sign of ensuing rain if appears in dry season; and is a forecast of the termination of rain if appears in raining season. (iv)

Neuter is that which is neither masculine nor feminine. If the gender is indiscernible, decision should be made at the time of its puberty. In case of seminal emission it is male; in case of menstruation and growth of breasts it is female. In the absence of any of these signs, if the discharge of urine is in a straight line, it is male, otherwise female. (v)

The stone is hard.

The iron breaks the stone.

The fire melts the Iron.

The water extinguishes the fire.

The clouds carry the water.

The wind blows the clouds.

An angel controls the winds.

The angel of death will overpower, at the fixed time, the angel who controls the winds.

And death will overpower (even) the angel of death.

And divine order overpowers death. (vi)

A slaughtered man was lying on the ground; and close by a man stood, with a knife, in his hand, dripping blood.

“Did you murder this man? People asked him.

“Yes” He said.

People arrested him. Another man appeared on the scene and asked the people to set the arrested man free, as, in reality, it was he who killed the man whose corpse they were carrying. Both the accused and the corpse were brought before Imam Ali (a.s.).

“Why did you confess to a crime you did not do?” Imam Ali (a.s.) asked.

“Master! I am a butcher, while slaughtering the sheep I had to go to urinate. In a hurry I carried my knife with me. There I saw the murdered man. These people surrounded me. It all happened in a flash of the eyelids. I was at a loss. I thought no one would believe my innocence in view of the circumstantial evidence.”

“Are you the murderer?” Imam Ali (a.s.) asked the other man.

“I am”, replied the man “but I had left the scene of crime unnoticed. I was safe. Then I saw the butcher wrongly implicated. My conscience compelled me to tell the truth.”

Imam Ali (a.s.) asked Imam Hasan (a.s.) to sit in judgement.

Imam Hasan (a.s.) said:

“Free both of them. The butcher is innocent, and the real murderer, by accepting his guilt, saved the life of an innocent man. Allah has said:

And whoso saves the life of one (human being), it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind. [Ma-idah: 32]

As an act of humility, whenever the Imam went for the pilgrimage to Makka, he went on foot, sometimes even walking barefoot.

When he was 5 years old the event of Mubahila took place. He was taken there by the Holy Prophet, alongwith Imam Husayn (a.s.), Imam Ali (a.s.) and Sayyida Fatimah (a.s.).

In the event of blanket (*kisa*) also he was with his grandfather, father, mother, brother. It was at this time that Allah revealed ayah tathir:

Verily, verily Allah intends but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness, O you the people of the house, and purify you (with) a thorough purification. [33:33] and sent Jibrail to convey that the whole of universe was created in the love of these five (*panjatan*).

In 10th *hijra*, after the Holy Prophet performed his last Haj, Imam Hasan (a.s.) was with him when he received the divine message at Ghadir: (*O Muhammad*) *Deliver what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you do not*

do it, then, (it will be as if) you have not delivered His message (at all); and surely Allah will protect you from (the mischief) of men; Verily Allah does not guide a disbelieving people. [5:67]

In the 11th year of *hijra* the Holy Prophet left this world. At this time Imam Hasan (a.s.) was only 8 years. He was with his father and saw how the last rites were carried out.

Just after 3 months his loving mother passed away. Then he was taken under the care and guidance of his father Imam Ali (a.s.).

During the *khilafat* of his father, Imam Hasan (a.s.) was entrusted with judicial powers which he used with wisdom. He was also incharge of the *bayt al-mal*. He was always at his father's side both during peace or war.

When Imam Ali (a.s.) had to lead a secluded life and patiently bear abuses even from the *mimbar* (pulpit), his two sons, Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.) learnt from him how to be patient.

On 19th Ramazan of 40th *hijra* Imam Ali (a.s.) was attacked by Ibn Muljim in a mosque. Imam Ali (a.s.) passed the secrets of *imamat* to Imam Hasan (a.s.), asked him to look after all the family members, and then succumbed to his injuries and died on 21st Ramazan. Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) performed his last rites.

The same night a large number of people pledged (*bay-at*) to Imam Hasan (a.s.), vowing to fight those who fought with him, and live in peace with those who kept peace with him. The next morning Imam Hasan (a.s.) addressed his supporters. He said:

“It is incumbent upon you by divine command to obey us. Allah has enjoined upon you to obey us as well as His messenger in order to obey Him. The Holy Quran states: ‘Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and the ulil amr (those vested with authority) from among you.’ [4:49]”

Amongst the crowd Abdullah bin Abbas rose and said: “O people! This is the son of your

Prophet, the trustee (*wasi*) of your Imam. So pledge loyalty (*bay-at*) to him.” The people responded: “No one is more loved by us nor has anyone more right to succeed.” They rushed forward to pledge allegiance to Imam Hasan (a.s.) as their successor.

When Muawiyah learnt of this he began preparations for war. Spies were sent to Kufa and Basra. They were to instigate discontent amongst the supporters of the Imam and report to Muawiyah.

Imam Hasan (a.s.) knew about the plots of Muawiyah who wanted to kill him and take control of the government. Muawiyah relied on the greedy men who wanted wealth and power. As Imam Hasan (a.s.), the true successor of the Holy Prophet, could not satisfy their evil desires, they went into the camp of Muawiyah.

When all the tribal chiefs with their followers joined hands with Muawiyah he set off toward Iraq. At the first sign of the movement of troops on the Iraq - Syrian border, Imam Hasan (a.s.)

asked his supporters to prepare for war. With the exception of only a handful of sincere followers, no one responded to the call. Adi, the noble son of Hatim Tai made a sincere appeal to the people, but it was of no use.

It was Abdullah ibn Abbas, the son of the Prophet's uncle who put the last nail in the coffin. Though he was thought to be a sincere and reliable supporter of the Imam, the amount of four thousand dinars and a permanent income from Basra offered to him by Muawiyah proved to be too much of a temptation for him. He walked away from the Imam's camp and happily shifted into Muawiyah's quarter.

On his way to the front the Imam stopped at Sabat. There after prayers he pleaded with the people to enjoin truth and justice.

Muawiyah saw that with the exception of a few of his sincere friends, most had turned away from the Imam. He took advantage of this and

started riots against the Imam. One day a group of unruly antagonists surrounded the Imam (a.s.) as he was passing through a narrow street in Sabat. A man named Jarrib bin Sanan stabbed Imam Hasan (a.s.) in his thigh. The Imam had to be carried on a stretcher to al-Madain.

When this news reached Muawiyah he asked his agents either to kill the Imam or hand over him to Muawiyah. Qays bin Sad, one of very few friends stayed with the Imam, till last, informed him that Muawiyah had been stopped at Habubiyya.

From there Muawiyah wrote to Imam Hasan (a.s.) offering him a peace treaty and agreeing to accept as many conditions as the Imam wanted. Imam Hasan (a.s.) did not trust Muawiyah but there was no way out but to abandon the war and negotiate a truce.

The Imam called for many conditions including:

People be dealt with according to the

Holy Quran and *sunnah*; the friends and companions of Ali (a.s.) and all their women and children should be protected, Imam Hasan (a.s.) Imam Husayn (a.s.) and the other kinsmen of the Holy Prophet should be assured of their rights; a sum of fifty thousand dirhams should be paid annually out of the national revenue as *khiraj* (tribute) to Imam Hasan (a.s.); abusive language shall not be used with reference to Amir al-Muminin Ali (a.s.) and that the custom of abusing Ali (a.s.) and his followers after prayers, shall be discontinued.

Muawiyah swore that he would fulfil all the conditions. When the truce had been concluded, Muawiyah invited Imam Hasan (a.s.) to address the people in the Masjid of Kufa.

The Holy Imam said:

“Muawiyah disputed with me in the matter of the special position assigned to me, and I found no supporters. Therefore, in order to restore peace and prevent bloodshed I resigned my (political) power.

You had promised to fight whom I might fight and to make peace with whom I make peace.”

When Muawiyah spoke he shamelessly went back on his word.

“By Allah, 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 Allah has given that to me when you were reluctant to obey Him. Indeed I have been requested by Hasan (a.s.) to give him undertakings and I have given them to him. All of them are now under my foot. And from now on I will not fulfil anything. I have taken from Ali (a.s.) and from Hasan (a.s.) what I have taken.”

Imam Hasan (a.s.) rose and spoke:

“You who mention Ali, I am Hasan and Ali was my father. You are Muawiyah and your father was Sakhr (Abu Sufyan). My mother was Fatimah and your mother was Hinda. My grandfather was the Messenger of Allah and

your grandfather was Harb. My grandmother was Khadijah and your grandmother was Futaylah. May Allah curse him who tries to reduce our reputation and diminish our nobility, who does evil against our antiquity, and who has been foremost in unbelief and hypocrisy.”

The people in the mosque said:
“Be it so! Be it so!”

In Islamic society the divinely chosen Imam is also the administrator of the society in the capacity of an *ulil amr* because, social, economic and political life is not separate from religion. It is obligatory to obey the *ulil amr*.

O You who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and ulil amr from among you. [4:59]

After a ten year reign, Muawiyah decided to hand over power to his son, Yazid. He communicated secretly with Juda, daughter of Ashath bin Qays, the wife of Imam Hasan (a.s.).

He promised her that he would arrange to have her married to his son Yazid if she collaborated with him to arrange the murder of the Imam.

He also sent her a thousand dirhams in part payment. Having accepted the bribe Juda poisoned the Imam. When death was close to Imam Hasan (a.s.) he told Imam Husayn (a.s.): “My brother, I am leaving you and joining my Lord. I have been given poison to drink and I know who has poisoned me. I will oppose him before Allah, the Mighty and High. Therefore, say nothing about that and wait for what Allah, the mighty and high, will decide concerning me. When I am dead shut my eyes, wash and shroud me. Then carry me on my beir to the grave of my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah.”

On 28th Safar in the year of 50 hijra (670 A.D.) our Holy Imam departed from this world. At that time he was 48 years old. His *imamat* had lasted 10 years. His trustee (*wasi*) was Imam Husayn (a.s.).

According to the will of Imam Hasan (a.s.), the burial procession left the house for the tomb of the Holy Prophet but the evil forces, under the command of Marwan, prevented Imam Husayn (a.s.) to bury Imam Hasan (a.s.) besides the Holy Prophet. A large volley of arrows hit the bier, few of them passed through the body of Imam Hasan (a.s.) It was the first shameful incident in Islamic history, after the Holy Prophet, that the bier of the grandson of the Messenger of Allah was brought back to home to rearrange the coffin. At last Imam Husayn (a.s.), the symbol of peace, maintained the peace and buried his brother in Jannatul Baqi, the graveyard in Madina.

THE HOLY QURAN SAYS

Verily, verily Allah intends but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness, O you Ahlul Bayt (the people of the house), and purify you (with) a thorough purification.

THE HOLY PROPHET SAID

My Ahlul Bayt are like the ark of Nuh.
Whoever comes on it is saved, whoever stays back is drowned.

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