

Ḥasan al-Muthannā

And His Son

‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ

رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ

—A glimpse into their noble lives—

BY:

‘Alī ibn Ḥamd ibn Muḥammad al-Tamīmī

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Transliteration key

أ-'	ض - ḍ
آ - ā	ط - ṭ
ب - b	ظ - ḏ
ت - t	ع - ʿ
ث - th	غ - gh
ج - j	ف - f
ح - ḥ	ق - q
خ - kh	ك - k
د - d	ل - l
ذ - dh	م - m
ر - r	ن - n
ز - z	و - w, ū
س - s	ه - h
ش - sh	ي - y, ī
ص - ṣ	

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Introduction

All praise belongs to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى by Whose grace all meritorious feats are accomplished, and by Whose command the world and the hereafter functions. Peace and salutations be upon the best of creation, Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and upon his chosen Companions.

Verily the honourable scholars of this Ummah, who are bastions of guidance and upholders of the Truth, have always been a source of pride for this Ummah. And in this scholastic galaxy there are two radiant stars, Imām Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and his son, ‘Abd Allāh—may Allah shower his mercy upon them—whose noble status is attested to by the pages of history, whether it be those of the Ahl al-Sunnah or others.

They also happen to be from the venerable scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt, who we have been instructed to love and to be mindful of their rights [making studying their lives all the more beneficial].

However, it is extremely unfortunate that the current generation are wholly unacquainted with any aspect of their lives. Thus we have compiled this brief treatise which sheds light on their lives and scholarly prowess, as well as their social and political exploits. We concluded the discussion by addressing a few misconceptions that are commonly held—unfortunate as it may be—about these two personalities and providing a fitting response to them.

We ask Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to accept our humble efforts and make it a means for our benefit and others as well. And Allah is the Most High, All Knowing.

Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā

Name and lineage

He is the eminent Sayyid Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan¹ ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the son of Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, the grandson of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

His great grandfather is the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Best of Creation and Leader of the Worlds.

His father is Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, the leader of the youth of Paradise.²

His grandfather is ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه, one of the Ten Promised Paradise, and the fourth Rightly Guided Khalīfah.

His paternal uncle is Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Shahīd رضي الله عنه, the leader of the youth of Paradise.³

His paternal granduncle is Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Shahīd رضي الله عنه, the possessor of two wings in Jannah.

His paternal great granduncle is Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib رضي الله عنه, the leader of the Martyrs.⁴

His grandmother is Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the Queen of the Women in Paradise.⁵

1 He is called Ḥasan al-Muthannā because of his and his father’s name both being Ḥasan.

2 *Al-Tirmidhī*, # 3868. Grade: Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 *Ibid*.

4 *Mustadrak al-Ḥākim*, # 4900. Declared Ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, # 374.

5 *Al-Tirmidhī*, merits of Khadījah, # 3878; Anas رضي الله عنه narrates, “The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘Sufficient for you among the women of mankind are Maryam bint ‘Imrān, Khadījah bint Khuwaylid, Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad and Āsiyah the wife of Fir‘awn.’” *Al-Tirmidhī* said, “The narration is Ṣaḥīḥ.” *continued...*

His great grandmother is Khadījah bint Khuwaylid, Leader of the women of Paradise.¹

As you can see he was surrounded by nobility, blessed indeed are his origins and noble is the house in which he was raised.

توارثهم آباء آبائهم قبل
وتغرس إلا في منابتها النخل

فما كان من خير أتوه فإنما
هل ينبت الخطي إلا وشبيهه

Whatever good they have done it is merely due to their forefathers previously inheriting it from each other.

The Khaṭṭī² spears are not produced but by their roots.³ And date palms can only be cultivated in places fit for it.⁴

As for his mother, she is Khawlah bint Manzūr al-Fazāriyyah.

Brothers

He had a number of brothers, amongst whom were Zayd, Ṭalḥah, Abū Bakr, and ‘Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه who were all martyred alongside their uncle Ḥusayn Ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in Karbalā’. The life of Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan رضي الله عنه was saved by his mother’s paternal cousin, Asmā’ ibn Khārijah al-Fazārī, who pulled him aside from those who had been taken captive, saying, “I will never hand over the son of Khawlah ever!” ‘Umar ibn Sa’d then said, “Give Abū al-Ḥasan his nephew.”⁵

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Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, # 3624; The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to Sayyidah Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, “Are you not pleased that you will be the chief among the believing women or of this Ummah?”

1 As above.

2 Referring to the spears of a specific place in Baḥrayn, known for their quality and endurance.

3 Referring to the tree from which it is made.

4 The intent is to prove that a noble person hails from a noble lineage.

5 *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2/ 230; al-Mufīd: *Al-Irshād*, 2/25; *‘Umdat al-Ṭālib*, pg. 167.

Also among his brothers: ‘Amr, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Ḥasan, Muḥammad, Ya‘qūb, Ismā‘īl, ‘Umar, and Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه.

The progeny of Ḥasan bin ‘Alī رضي الله عنه only continued through Ḥasan al-Muthannā and Zayd ibn Ḥasan.¹

It becomes apparent from the above that Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه would name his children after the Ṣaḥābah—Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, Ṭalḥah, etc.—as an expression of love and a means of honouring them. If the fabrications contained in some books—of enmity and hatred existing between the Ṣaḥābah and Ahl al-Bayt—had any basis then the Ahl al-Bayt would not have named their children after their enemies, according to their assumption, as a person will never name his beloved children after those who he loathes.

Ḥasan al-Muthannā رضي الله عنه also had uterine brothers through his mother, Khawlah bint Manzūr al-Fazāriyyah, and they are: Ibrāhīm, Dāwūd, and Umm al-Qāsim; who were the children of Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah bin ‘Ubayd Allāh رضي الله عنه who was titled Muḥammad al-Sajjād, as Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه married his widow after he was martyred in the Battle of Jamal.²

In addition, Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه married the sister of Muḥammad al-Sajjād, Umm Ishāq bint Ṭalḥah, who bore him a son who he named Ṭalḥah after his maternal grandfather, Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh رضي الله عنه, the eminent Ṣaḥābī and one of the Ten Promised Paradise.³

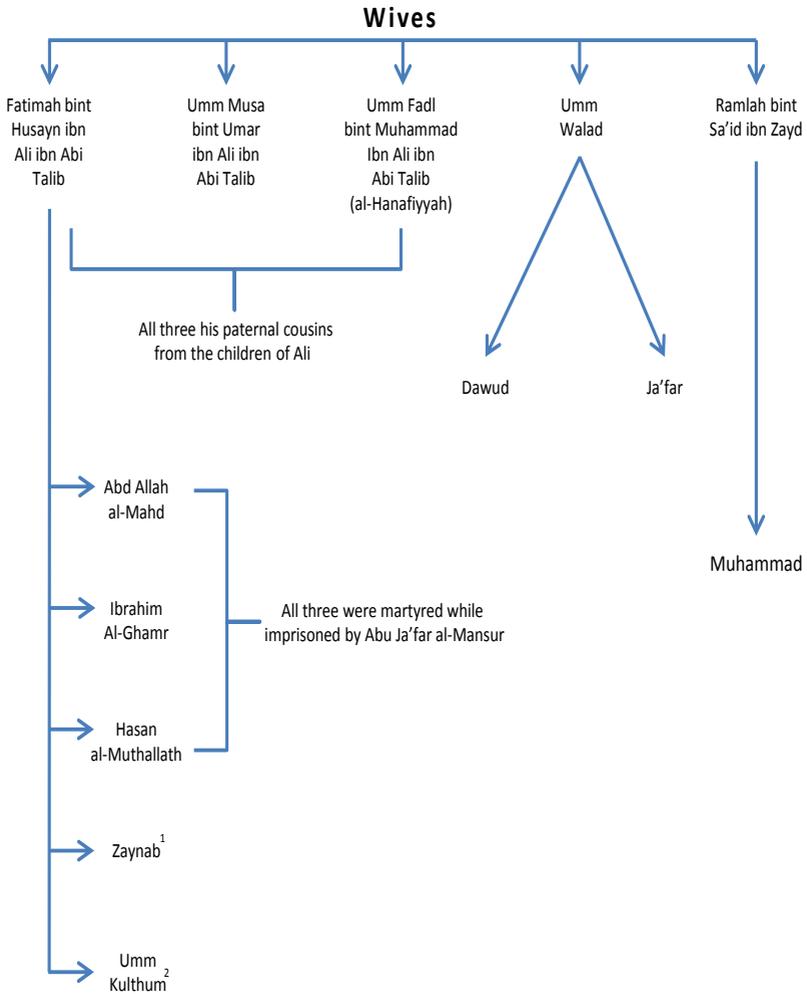
Also noteworthy is that Ḥasan al-Muthannā رضي الله عنه also went on to marry the daughter of one of the Ten Promised Paradise, Ramlah bint Sa‘d ibn Zayd, as will be discussed. May Allah be pleased with them all, verily they were brothers who loved each other deeply.

1 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 3/279.

2 *Tārīkh al-Dimashq*, 15/55.

3 *Al-Majdī fī Ansāb al-Ṭālibiyīn*, with the research of Mahdī Rajā‘ī, pg. 202.

Wives and Children of Ḥasan al-Muthannā



1. Zaynab was wed to Walid ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan

2. Umm Kulthum was wed to Muhammad al-Baqir ibn Ali ibn Husayn. She passed away while in his wedlock and did not bear him any children.

Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn

Sayyidunā Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ married his daughter to Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his nephew.¹

They were blessed with 3 sons and 2 daughters from this union. She lived to approximately 90 years of age. Her narrations have been reported in the books of Ḥadīth—and she is considered Thiqaḥ²—from her father, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās, and Umm al-Mu’minīn ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Her children in turn narrate from her as well as others. After the demise of Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ she married ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, and they were blessed with a son, Muḥammad, from this union, who was titled al-Dībāj due to his handsomeness.

An example of her sound judgement and wisdom can be seen in the narration reported by her son, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

جَمَعْتَنَا أُمَّنَا فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ الْحُسَيْنِ ، فَقَالَتْ : يَا بَنِيَّ ، إِنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ ، مَا نَالَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ السَّفَةِ بِسَفَهِهِمْ وَلَا أَدْرَكَوهُ مِنْ لُدَاتِهِمْ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أَدْرَكَهُ أَهْلُ الْمُرْوَآتِ بِمُرُورَاتِهِمْ ، فَاسْتَبْرُوا بِسِتْرِ اللَّهِ

Our mother, Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn, gathered us together and then said, “O my sons, verily—by Allah—there is not anything the foolish people have obtained through their foolishness, likewise there is no passion that they have fulfilled, but that the people of dignity have obtained the same through their dignity. Therefore always remain in the cover of the concealment of Allah.”³

A woman of this stature would not go on but raise noble personalities; her sons—‘Abd Allāh, Ibrāhīm, Ḥasan, and Muḥammad—all blessed with magnanimity and greatness, may Allah shower his endless mercies upon them.

1 Al-Mufid: *Al-Irshād*, 2/25.

2 *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, # 8652. Thiqaḥ is a term used in the science of Ḥadīth to indicate one who is of sound religious and intellectual capacity, capable of accurately transmitting Ḥadīth.

3 *Tārīkh Baḡhdād*, 3/275.

Just marvel at the marital relations between the Ahl al-Bayt and the house of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه, this is but a fine example of love and affinity.

She passed away in the year 110 A.H, and it has been said 117 A.H, which appears to be more correct, and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best. She was buried in Madīnah, may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى be pleased with her.

Umm al-Faḍl bint Muḥammad al-Ḥanafīyyah ibn ‘Alī and Umm Mūsā bint ‘Umar ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

His paternal cousins, who he married on the same night.¹

Ramlah bint Sa‘īd ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Nufayl al-‘Adawī

She is the daughter of Sayyidunā Sa‘īd ibn Zayd, one the Ten Promised Paradise and an eminent Ṣaḥābī of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidah Ramlah and Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā were blessed with a son from this union who they named Muḥammad, after who he received his agnomen, Abū Muḥammad.

This informs us of the amicable and cordial relationships that existed between the Ṣaḥābah and Ahl al-Bayt, the bonds of which were strengthened through marriage.

Umm Ḥabībah

She was an Umm Walad² from Rome, she bore him Dāwūd and Ja‘far.

1 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 5/319; *Faḥḥ al-Bārī*, 9/155. The narration which al-Bukhārī appended to his Ṣaḥīḥ, # 5015, and which Ḥafīz adjoined in *Taghliq al-Taghliq*, 4/402. Refer to *Sunan Sa‘īd ibn Manṣūr*, 1/95.

2 Umm Walad is a slave who bears children for her master, as a result she cannot be sold and will be automatically set free on the death of the master.

Narrations of Ḥasan al-Muthannā

Al-Mizzī states:

روى عن أبيه الحسن بن علي وعن عبد الله بن جعفر وعن زوجته وفاطمة بنت الحسين

He narrates from his father Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far, and from his wife Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn.¹

Islam awarded woman their rights and status, in both the transmission of narrations and knowledge, such that a husband is not deterred to learn from his wife and narrate from her, as Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has done.

Al-Nasā’ī reports one Ḥadīth from him in his *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* which he relates from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far concerning the *Kalimāt al-Faraj* (incantation for salvation). Abū Bakr ibn Ḥafṣ reports from Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan:

زوج عبد الله بن جعفر ابنته من الحجاج فقال لها إن نزل بك الموت أو أمر من أمور الدنيا فاستقبليه بأن تقول لا إله إلا الله الحليم الكريم سبحان الله رب العرش العظيم الحمد لله رب العالمين قال فأتيت الحجاج فقلتها فقال لقد جئتني وأنا أريد قتلك فأنت اليوم أحب إلي من كذا وكذا

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far married his daughter to Ḥajjāj and he said to her, “If you ever face death or any other worldly difficulty then face it while reciting:

لا إله إلا الله الحليم الكريم سبحان الله رب العرش العظيم الحمد لله رب العالمين

*Lā ilāha illallāhu al-Ḥalīm al-Karīm Subhānallāhi Rabbi al-‘Arsh al-Aẓīm
al-Ḥamdu lillāhi Rabbi al-‘Ālamīn*

As once I went to Ḥajjāj and recited this, he then said to me, “You came to me while I had the intention to kill you, but today you have become more beloved to me than such and such.”²

1 *Tahdhib al-Kamāl*, # 1215.

2 Al-Nasā’ī: *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, chapter of Dhikr, 6/165, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah. There is a difference of opinion concerning the narrator Mis‘ar ibn Kudām.

Al-Dhahabī said about him:

وهو قليل الرواية و الفتيا مع صدقه و جلالته

He has very few narrations and fatwās¹ despite his truthfulness and lofty status.²

‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī narrates from him in his *al-Muṣannaḥ*³ that he once saw a person standing at the house wherein is the grave of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, supplicating and sending blessing upon him. Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said to him:

لا تفعل فان رسول الله قال لا تتخذوا قبوري عيدا و لا تجعلوا بيوتكم قبورا و صلوا علي حيث ما كنتم
فان صلاتكم تبلغني

Do not do that as the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said, “Do not make my grave a place of gathering and do not make your houses into graves. Invoke blessings upon me wherever you may be as your blessings reach me.”⁴

This reveals to us the nature in which he would compassionately call towards good and issue rulings substantiated from Shar‘ī proofs. These are two aspects we are in much need of today. It is obvious that the man was supplicating to Allah and invoking blessings upon the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ [which is not prohibited in the least]; however, Imām Ḥasan al-Muthannā feared the man falling into sin by adopting the grave of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a place of congregation; hence his admonishment. What then of those who supplicate to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ or seek assistance from others besides Allah سُُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى؟ A Muslim should be wary not to divert the absolute sole right of Allah to be submitted to and to be called upon, to another, even if that person be the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

1 Fatwā: Religious edicts. Plural: Fatāwā.

2 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 4/483.

3 *Al-Muṣannaḥ*, 3/577 # 6726. The narration is Mursal, it contains a person who he did not identify.

4 Op. Cit.

Amongst his narrations reported by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mujam al-Awṣaṭ* is the narration of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه asking ‘Alī رضي الله عنه for the hand of Umm Kulthūm رضي الله عنها. ‘Alī replied, “She is still young.” ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “I heard the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, ‘Every link and tie will be severed on the Day of Qiyāmah except my links and ties.’¹ Thus I would love nothing more than to have a link with the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم.”

Thus this narration is established through him, and it establishes the marital relations between the houses of ‘Alī and ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. It also informs us that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was cognisant of the virtue which the Ahl al-Bayt possess.

A few sayings of Ḥasan al-Muthannā

He once said to a person advising about the practice of *Taqiyyah* (subterfuge):

ويملك التقية انما هي باب رخصة للمسلم، إذا اضطر إليها وخاف من ذي سلطان أعطاه غير ما في نفسه يدرأ عن ذمة الله. وليست باب فضل، وإنما الفضل في القيام بأمر الله وقول الحق. وأيم الله ما بلغ من التقية أن يجعل بها لعبد من عباد الله أن يضل عباد الله

Woe to you! Verily *Taqiyyah* is only a concession for a Muslim when compelled to do so and he fears the king will do something to him which he will be unable to avert from his responsibility to Allah; It is not an act of virtue, verily the virtuous thing to do is to establish the order of Allah and to state the Truth. By Allah, *Taqiyyah* does not reach the point where one of the slaves of Allah can use it to misguide the slaves of Allah.²

This gives us an insight into the Fiqh of this honourable Imām and his advice to the Muslims concerning *Taqiyyah* and how it should be used as a means to protect the blood of a Believer, or avert harm from him. It is not considered an act of virtue or meant to be used as a means of confusing the believers regarding vital aspects of their dīn and lead them astray.

1 *Al-Ṭabarānī*, # 6609. Al-Albānī declared it Ṣaḥīḥ in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, # 2036.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 15/60.

Ibn 'Asākir reports from al-Aṣma'ī:

دخلت في الطواف عند السحر، فإذا أنا بـغلام شاب حسن الوجه، حسن القامة، عليه شملة، وله ذوايتان، وهو متعلق بأستار الكعبة يقول

شكوت إليك الضّرّ فارحم شكايّتي	ألا أيها المأمول في كل ساعة
فهب لي ذنوبي كلّها واقض حاجتي	ألا يا رجائي أنت كاشف كربتي
أللّزاد أبكي أم لبعد مسافتي	فزادي قليل ما أراه مبلغتي
فما في الوري خلق جنى كجنائتي	أتيت بأعمال قباح رديّة
فأين رجائي ثم أين مخافتي	أتحرقتي بالنار يا غاية المنى

فقدمت إليه، وكشفت عن وجهه، فإذا به الحسن بن الحسن بن علي بن أبي طالب عليهم السلام، فقلت: يا سيدي مثلك من يقول هذه المقالة وأنت من أهل بيت النبوة، ومعدن الرسالة؟! قال: هيهات! يا أصمعي، إن الله خلق الجنة لمن أطاعه وإن كان عبداً حبشياً، وخلق النار لمن عصاه وإن كان ولداً قرشياً، أما سمعت قول الله عزّ وجلّ: "فَإِذَا نَفَخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

I entered to make *ṭawāf* (practice of Muslims circumambulating the Ka'bah), where I saw a young man of striking appearance and strong build who was covered in a shawl which had two ends. He was holding on to the cover of the Ka'bah and saying:

O Being in who all hopes lie; I complain to you, so see my complaints.

My hopes lie in you, remover of my difficulty; forgive my sins and fulfil my needs.

My provisions are few which will not take me to my destination; is it over my provisions I cry or over the distance of my travels.

I come to you with actions that are far and a few; I am a sinner like no other in the creation.

Will you burn me in the fire, O guardian of ultimate hopes; where is then my hopes and my fear.

So I went to him and uncovered his face, and lo and behold it was Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. So I said to him, "O my master, the likes of you

saying such a thing, when you are from the Ahl al-Bayt of Nubuwwah and the treasure trove of Risālah?”

He replied, “Please stop, O Aṣma’ī! Verily Allah has created Paradise for those who obey Him, even if it be an Abyssinian slave; and He has created the Fire for those who disobey Him, even if it be a son of the Quraysh. Did you not hear the words of Allah, “*So when the Horn is blown, no relationship will there be among them that Day, nor will they ask about one another.*”^{1,2}

I take an oath by Allah this is true understanding of Islam and the reality of worship; as it is stated in the Ḥadīth:

ومن بطأ به عمله لم يسرع به نسبه

He who lags behind in doing good deeds, his noble lineage will not take him ahead.³

Taqwā and good deeds are the only currency valid between the Creator and His creation. This is what was understood and taught by this illustrious Imām; and it was this that he emphasised in his statement:

أحبونا لله فإن أطعنا الله فأحبونا ، وإن عصينا الله فأبغضونا فلو كان الله نافعاً احداً بقرابته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بغير طاعة لنفع أباه وأمه

Love us for the sake of Allah if we obey Allah. If we disobey Allah then hate us! Had Allah made familial links to the Messenger ﷺ a means of benefit without obedience then the most eligible for that would have been his father and mother.⁴

1 Sūrah al-Mu'minūn: 101.

2 *Tārīkh al-Dimashq*, 44/145. It appears that this incident actually transpired with Ḥasan al-Muthallath, the son of Ḥasan al-Muthannā, as Ḥasan al-Muthannā passed away before this and did not meet al-Aṣma’ī.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter on Dhikr and Tawbah, # 2699.

4 *Nasb Quraysh*, 2/49.

Further emphasising the fact that Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ believed that the Rightful Khalīfah after the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was Abū Bakr, followed by ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and then his grandfather ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and that the claim of a bequest having been made in favour of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to be the Khalīfah was false, is the narrations reported in *Tārīkh al-Dimashq*. A man believed that the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had explicitly instructed ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ should be the Khalīfah citing the words of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, “Whoever’s *Mawlā* (friend) I am then ‘Alī is his *Mawlā* (friend).”¹ Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to the man:

أما والله إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن كان يعني بذلك الإمرة والسلطان والقيام على الناس بعده لأفصح لهم بذلك كما أفصح لهم بالصلاة والزكاة وصيام رمضان وحج البيت ولقال لهم: إن هذا ولي أمركم من بعدي فاسمعوا له وأطيعوا فما كان من رواء هذا شيء فإن أنصح الناس كان للمسلمين رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

By Allah! If, by that statement, he intended (for ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) a position of leadership and authority, he would have clearly expressed it, just as he clearly expressed (the injunctions of) *ṣalāh*, *zakāh*, fasting in Ramaḍān, and Ḥajj. He would have said, “O people! This (referring to ‘Alī) is your leader after me, so listen to him and obey him.” There would not have been any dispute after this, for indeed the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the most benign and considerate of people to the Muslims.²

The narration cited as proof for the immediate succession of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ does not prove or establish anything concerning the *Khilāfah*, as explained by Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. If this was indeed intended then the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would have said that in explicit unambiguous terms. Furthermore the word *Mawlā* (friend) is the opposite of enemy as opposed to the word *Wālī* which means ruler. The Ḥadīth contains the word *Mawlā* and not the word *Wālī*, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not say, “Whoever’s *Wālī* I am then ‘Alī is his *Wālī*.”

1 There is difference of opinion concerning the authenticity of this narration. Al-Bukhārī, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī, and Ibn Ḥazm deemed it *ḍa‘īf*, while Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal and al-Tirmidhī deemed it *ḥasan*. Refer to Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, 7/320.

2 Reported by Muḥammad ibn ‘Āṣim al-Aṣbahānī in his *Juz*, # 126; and with his chain by Ibn ‘Asākir in his *Tārīkh*, 13/71.

This gives us an insight into the farsightedness, understanding, and fairmindedness of Imām Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ; a Ḥadīth is understood by facts and not by one's whims. This also illustrates his high regard for all Ṣaḥābah and for 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Trials and Tribulations

This illustrious Imām had to also face severe trials and tribulations, which is the wont of the pious believers and scholars of dīn. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

*Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried?!*¹

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has been reported to have said:

ما يزال البلاء بالمؤمن والمؤمنة في نفسه وولده وماله حتى يلقي الله تعالى وما عليه خطيئة

A Muslim, male or female, continues to remain under trial in respect of his life, property, and offspring until he faces Allah, the Exalted, with no sin in his record.²

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also said:

عظم الجزاء مع عظم البلاء وإن الله إذا أحب قوما ابتلاهم فمن رضي فله الرضا ومن سخط فله السخط

The greatest reward comes with the greatest trial. When Allah loves a people He tests them. Whoever accepts that wins His pleasure but whoever is discontent with that earns His wrath.³

1 Sūrah al-Ankabūt: 2.

2 *Al-Tirmidhī*, #2399. Al-Albānī declared it Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 *Al-Tirmidhī*, #2396. Al-Albānī declared it Ṣaḥīḥ.

The first amongst the trials that he faced was the tragic event of Karbalā' and the killing of his uncle Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and many illustrious personalities of the Ahl al-Bayt and others.¹ His life was spared either due to his young age or due to the intercession of his maternal uncle Asmā' ibn Khārījah. He was subsequently freed and his wounds treated. It has also been said that he was released due to him suffering from an illness.

Also among the trials that he faced, as reported by al-Dhahabī in his *Tārīkh al-Islām*:

كان الحسن وصي ابيه و ولي صدقة علي فقال له الحجاج يوماً وهو يسايره في موكبه بالمدينة اذ كان امير المدينة ادخل عمك عمر بن علي معك في صدقة علي فانه عمك و بقية اهلك قال لا اغير شرط علي قال اذا ادخله معك فساخر الي عبد الملك بن مروان فرحب به و وصله و كتب الي الحجاج كتابا لا يجاوزه

Ḥasan [al-Muthannā] was the executor of his father's will and the custodian over 'Alī's endowments. Ḥajjāj said to him one day, while riding alongside him during his procession in Madīnah and Ḥajjāj was governor of Madīnah then, "Add your uncle 'Umar ibn 'Alī also as custodian over the endowments of 'Alī as he is your paternal uncle and the remnants of your family."

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ replied, "I will not change the conditions of 'Alī."

Ḥajjāj replied, "If that is the case, I include him with you!"

So Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ journeyed to meet 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān who received him graciously and conferred it to him. 'Abd al-Malik then wrote to Ḥajjāj instructing him to relinquish it.²

In this manner did Allah save him from the clutches of Ḥajjāj and his oppression. The endowments were first entrusted to 'Alī and 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا, and thereafter to

1 *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, 2/183.

2 *Tarājim Ṭabaqat al-Āshir*, pg. 328, # 236. The report itself is from Zubayr al-Bakkār in *Nasb Quraysh*, 2/46. Also see *Al-Mufīd: al-Irshād*, 2/24.

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, then Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, then ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn and Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan, and then to Zayd ibn Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.¹ These were the endowments of Fadak, a portion of the spoils of Banū Qurayẓah, Khaybar, and other lands.

Al-Bayhaqī reports in *Shu‘b al-Īmān* another trial which he had to face:

ان عبد الملك بن مروان كتب إلى عامله بالمدينة هشام بن إسماعيل إنه بلغني أن الحسن بن الحسن يكاتب أهل العراق فإذا جاءك كتابي هذا فابعث إليه ليؤت به قال فجيء به إليه وشغله شيء قال فقام إليه علي بن حسين فقال يا ابن عم قل كلمات الفرج لا إله إلا الله الحليم الكريم لا إله إلا الله العلي العظيم سبحانه رب السماوات السبع ورب العرش العظيم الحمد لله رب العالمين قال فجلا للأخر وجهه، فنظر إليه فقال أرى وجهها قد قشب بكذبة خلوا سبيله ولنراجع فيه أمير المؤمنين

‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān wrote to his governor of Madīnah, Hishām ibn Ismā‘īl, “It has reached me that Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan is corresponding with the people of Iraq, so when this letter reaches you have him summoned so that he can be brought.”

So he Ḥasan was brought before him, but he got distracted by something.

‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn stood and said to him, “O my cousin, recite the *Kalimāt al-Faraj*:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ رَبِّ
الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

He then uncovered his face.

Hishām looked towards him and said, “I see a face that has been attributed with falsehood, let him free, and write to the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn.”²

In this manner did Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى save this pious servant through his sincere supplications to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and by entrusting his affairs to Allah only Who has no partner. Verily it is as the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

1 *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, # 3091-3094; *al-Irshād*, 2/23.

2 *Shu‘b al-Īmān*, 1/433.

Supplication (du‘ā’) is itself worship.¹

This incident informs us of the amicable relationship that existed between ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ; why should this not be the case when they are paternal cousins, who stood alongside each other at Karbalā’ and were from the few who survived? Furthermore they were brothers-in-law as well, Ḥasan al-Muthannā married to Fāṭimah, sister of ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn, and ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn wed to Umm ‘Abd Allāh, sister of Ḥasan al-Muthannā.

Demise of Ḥasan al-Muthannā

Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ passed away in the year 97 A.H according to the most authentic reports, when he was around his mid-fifties.² When Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was in his final illness he appointed Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Taymī—his uterine brother from Khawlah bint Manzūr al-Fazāriyyah—as the executor of his estate.

When his funeral bier was lifted, his creditors objected [demanding what was owed to them]; but Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah placated them saying, “I take responsibility for all of his debts,” which he paid, and it amounted to 40 000. This highlights the solidarity and love that existed between the families of the Ṣaḥābah and the Ahl al-Bayt even after their deaths.³

I wish to point out that the allegations made against Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik that he had Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ poisoned are false due to the fact that Ḥasan al-Muthannā passed away after Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik passed away in the year 96 A.H, while Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā passed the

1 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, # 1479; *al-Tirmidhī*, # 2169.

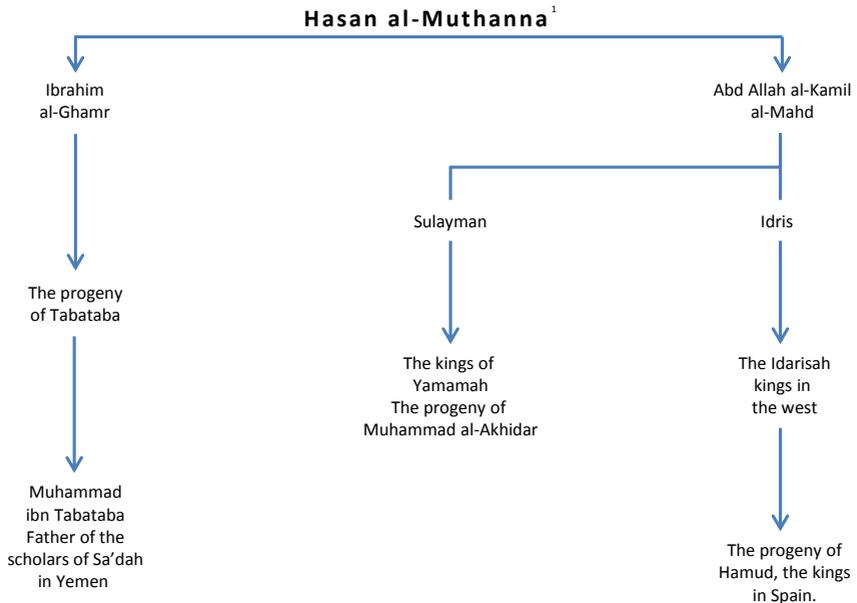
2 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 9/170; *Tārīkh al-Islām*, incidents of the year 97 A.H.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 13/71, 7/151.

following year in 97 A.H. Also worthy of note is the fact that Zaynab bint Ḥasan al-Muthannā was married to Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik.

May Allah showers his choicest blessing upon Ḥasan al-Muthannā, and infuse within our hearts love for him and all the believers.

Names of a few scholars from the progeny of Ḥasan al-Muthannā



1. This tree is derived from information contained in *Tarikh ibn Khaldun*, pg. 1512.

From His Progeny

- » The Kings of Ghana from Sudan; the progeny of Ṣālīḥ ibn Mūsā ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Sāqī.
- » The progeny of Numayy ibn Saʿd ibn Qatādah, Kings of Makkah, may Allah bless its sanctity.

From His Descendants

The result when nobility courses through your veins:

ابى منبت العيدان ان يتغيرا	ارى كل عود نابتا في ارومة
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I see every branch that sprouts in a tree, refuses to change its essence.

Another poet says:

كالرمح أنبوب على أنبوب	شرف تتابع كابرًا عن كابر
لنجيب قوم ليس بابن نجيب	واری النجابة لا يكون تمامها

Nobility passed down generation to generation, like a branch which grows on another branch.

And I see nobility does not materialise to perfection in the noble of a nation, if he himself is not the son of a noble.

This noble Imām had exemplary sons whose biographies illuminate the pages of history. We will make mention of a few of them here, a reminder to those who already know and a lesson for those who do not.

- » Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn Ḥasan ibn Jaʿfar ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā, Abū Ḥasan al-ʿAlawī known as Ibn Qīrāṭ who was the leader of the Ṭālibiyīn¹ in Baghdad.

1 The descendants of Abū Ṭālib.

- » Al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī, the author of the book, *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq*, a famous book in the science of geography.
- » The Ṣālīhiyūn, Kings of Ghana.
- » ‘Alī ibn Ḥamūd ibn Maymūn ibn Aḥmad al-Idrīsī, king of Cordoba.
- » Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī who passed away in Egypt and commonly known as Ibn Ṭābāṭabā al-‘Alawī. He was held in esteem by the ruling class and commonality.

His grandfather, Ibrāhīm, was called Ṭābāṭabā because his mother would make him dance when he was little and would say to him Ṭābāṭabā. It has been said that the reason for this name was that Ibrāhīm would pronounce the letter *Ṭa* similar to a *Qāf*, and once when asking to wear a *Qabā*¹ he was told that they would put on a *Farajiyah*² for him. In protest he began yelling, “No! Ṭābā Ṭābā!” referring to the *Qabā* robe.

- » ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā (b. 401 A.H).

An esteemed personality unmatched in his era in terms of his virtue and character. He is amongst the narrators of Ḥadīth and a repository of Ḥadīth in his time. He is also amongst the grammarians of his age.

- » Qatādah, leader of Makkah, Abū ‘Uzayr ibn Amīr Idrīs ibn Maṭā‘in ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn ‘Isā ibn Ḥusayn ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mūsā ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā; who is the grandfather of the Banū Numayy.
- » Qāsim ibn Idrīs ibn Idrīs ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā, who was the eldest son of Idrīs. The esteemed scholars of the Adārisah were his descendants.

1 *Qabā*: A type of robe worn on top of ones shirt or clothes.

2 *Farajiyah*: A long robe with broad sleeves, would often be worn by scholars.

- » The famous poet Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm (Ṭabāṭabā) ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā.

Amongst his poems is:

وَيُضْحِي كَتِيبَ الْبَالِ عِنْدِي حَزِينَهُ	حَسُودَ مَرِيضِ الْقَلْبِ يَخْفِي أُنِينَهُ
أَجْمَعُ مِنْ عِنْدِ الرُّوَاةِ فُنُونَهُ	يَلُومُ عَلَيَّ إِنْ رُحْتُ فِي الْعِلْمِ رَاغِباً
وَاحْفَظْ مِمَّا اسْتَفِيدُ حُيُونَهُ	وَأَعْرِفْ أَبْكَارَ الْكَلَامِ وَعَوْنَهُ
وَيُحْسِنُ بِالْجَهْلِ الذَّمِيمِ ظُنُونَهُ	وَيَزِعُ عَمَّ إِنْ الْعِلْمُ لَا يَجْلِبُ الْغِنَى
فَقِيْمَةُ كُلِّ النَّاسِ مِمَّا يَحْسِنُونَهُ	فِيَا لَأَتَمِّي دَعْنِي أَعَالِي بَقِيْمَةِ

He is a jealous person who conceals his groaning, and he always becomes restless and grieved.

He reproaches me when I passionately go to seek knowledge, to gather its various sciences from the transmitters.

And when I go to learn the newly developed styles of speech and when I memorise from what I assimilate...

He claims that knowledge cannot draw affluence and goes on to entertain good assumptions regarding ignorance.

So, O my reproacher, leave me to become valuable, for the value of each person lies in what he does best.

- » ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn Abī Šāliḥ ‘Abd Allāh ibn Jīlī Dost. Some trace his lineage back to Mūsā ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan¹. This is the famous ascetic, devout worshipper, Faqīh, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī al-Ḥambalī رحمته الله.
- » It is mentioned in *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (9/26) that al-Ḥākim has reported in the chapter of Manāqib from Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah—Yūnus ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā would say, “Imām al-Shāfi‘ī’s mother was Fāṭimah bint ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā ibn Ḥasan ibn Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

1 *Tārīkh al-Islām*, biography of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī رحمته الله. There is a difference of opinion regarding his ancestry from the Ahl al-Bayt عليهم السلام.

Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā

Name and lineage

He is the esteemed and noble Sayyid Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī al-Madanī, great grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, who was titled *Al-Maḥḍ*¹.

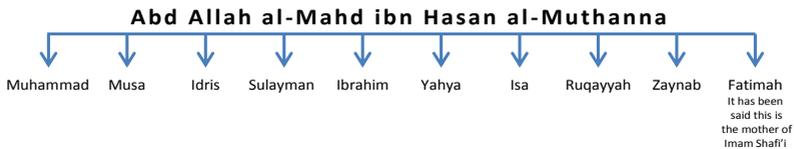
He possessed the same virtues and noble disposition as his forefathers.

له خلف يكفي السيادة بارع	إذا مات منا سيد قام بعده
على اضيله والعرق للعرق نازع	من ابنائه والعرق ينصل فرعه

When a leader from amongst us passes away, he is succeeded by a successor who is adept in handling matters of leadership...

From amongst his sons. And the offshoot of every root emerges just like it, for a breed draws the traits of its breed.

We have already discussed his ancestry under the biography of his father and there is no need to repeat it here.



¹ *Al-Maḥḍ* means pure. It is said that he was given this title due to both his mother and father being Hāshimī (as mentioned by Ibn ‘Inabah in *‘Umdat al-Ṭālib*, pg. 173), and it has also been said that this is a title given to one whose parents are cousins.

Virtues and Knowledge

Al-Wāḥidī said, “He was a devout worshipper, and he was honourable, eloquent in speech, awe-inspiring, and sharp tongued.”¹

He narrated ḥadīth from his mother, Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn, Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-A‘raj, Irkimah, and Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh.

Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn said, “‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan who narrates from his mother is Thiqaḥ.”²

In *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* of Ibn Ḥajar it is mentioned, “Extremely Thiqaḥ, he passed away in the beginning of the year 145 A.H when he was 75 years of age.”³

Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Abd Allāh said, “I have not seen our scholars honouring anyone as they would honour ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan.”⁴

Ibn ‘Asākir reported in *Tārīkh Dimashq* from Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Uthmān:

أن مالكاً سئل عن السدل فقال: لا بأس به فقد رأيت من يوثق به يفعل ذلك، فلما قام الناس قلت: من هو؟
قال: عبد الله بن الحسن

Imām Mālik was asked about *Sadl*⁵ and he replied, “There is no problem with it, I have seen one who is reliable do this.”

1 *Tārīkh al-Islām*, events of the year 141-160 A.H, 9/191.

2 *Al-Jarḥ wa Ta‘dīl*, 5/33; *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 11/91, where it states he is Thiqaḥ Ma‘mūn; *Tārīkh al-Islām*, events of the year 141-160 A.H, 9/191.

3 *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, # 3274.

4 *Tārīkh ibn Khaythamah*, 4/297.

5 *Sadl*: To wrap oneself in a shawl, keeping one's hands underneath the shawl, performing rukū‘ and sajdah in this manner.

When everybody stood to leave, I asked, “Who is he?”

Imam Mālik replied, “‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan.”¹

The reliability of Imām Mālik in the scrutiny and endorsement of narrators is well known, to the extent that many Muḥaddithīn regard a narrator as reliable if Imām Mālik has narrated from him.

Ibn ‘Asākir has also narrated:

أن عبد الله بن الحسن كان يكثر الجلوس إلى ربيعة قالوا فتذاكروا يوماً السنن فقال رجلٌ كان في المجلس ليس العمل على هذا؟ فقال عبد الله أرأيت إن كثر الجهال حتى يكونوا هم الحكام أفهم حجة على السنة؟ قال ربيعة أشهد أن هذا كلام أبناء الأنبياء

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan would regularly attend the gatherings of Rabī‘ah². One day a discussion on the Sunnah practices ensued, and a man in the gathering said, “This is not the common practice.”

‘Abd Allāh replied, “What do you say if the ignorant increase in number to the extent that they become the leaders, will they now become a source for what is the Sunnah?”

Rabī‘ah said, “I bear witness that this is the speech of the children of the Prophets.”³

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/253.

2 Rabī‘ah ibn Abī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Taymī, more commonly known as Rabī‘ah al-Rā’yī (d. 136 A.H). He narrated from al-Awzā’ī, al-Thawrī, and Mālik. Al-Zuhrī said about him, “I do not think there is anyone in Madīnah equal to Rabī‘ah al-Rā’yī.”

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/254.

Narrations of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan

Narration of al-Tirmidhī

عن عبد الله بن الحسن عن أمه فاطمة بنت الحسين عن جدتها فاطمة الكبرى قالت كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا دخل المسجد صلى على محمد وسلم وقال رب اغفر لي ذنوبي وافتح لي أبواب رحمتك وإذا خرج صلى على محمد وسلم وقال رب اغفر لي ذنوبي وافتح لي أبواب فضلك وقال علي بن حجر قال إسماعيل بن إبراهيم فلقيت عبد الله بن الحسن بمكة فسألته عن هذا الحديث فحدثني به قال كان إذا دخل قال رب افتح لي باب رحمتك وإذا خرج قال رب افتح لي باب فضلك“

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan narrated — from his mother, Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn — from her grandmother, Sayyidah Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, who said, “When Allah’s Messenger entered the Masjid he said ṣalāh and salām upon Muḥammad and then said,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَاْفْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

O my Rabb, pardon my sins and open the gates of Your mercy for me.

And when he exited he said ṣalāh and salām upon Muḥammad, and then said,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَاْفْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ فَضْلِكَ

O my Rabb, pardon my sins and open the gates of Your blessings for me.

‘Alī ibn Ḥujr related that Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm said, “I met ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan in Makkah and asked him about this ḥadīth, so he narrated it to me, and said, “When Allah’s Messenger entered, he said:

رَبِّ افْتَحْ لِي بَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

O my Rabb, open the gates of Your mercy for me.

And when he exited he said:

رَبِّ افْتَحْ لِي بَابَ فَضْلِكَ

O my Rabb, open the gates of Your blessings for me.¹

Narration of al-Nasā'ī

عن عبد الله بن الحسن عن عكرمة عن عبد الله بن عمرو رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من قُتل دون ماله فهو شهيد

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan narrates — from Ikrimah — from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever is killed defending his wealth, he is a martyr.”²

Al-Tirmidhī narrates the same Ḥadīth but from the chain ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan — Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah — from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.³

These few examples enlighten us as to the lofty position ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan held in transmitting the blessed aḥādīth of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as has been collected in the *Sunan* compilations; may Allah be pleased with him.

1 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, # 314, Book on Ṣalāh, Chapter: What is to be recited when entering the Masjīd; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, # 771, Book on the Masjīd and congregation, Chapter: What is to be recited when entering the Masjīd. Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn did not meet her grandmother, Fāṭimah bint Rasūlillāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, thus the Ḥadīth is Mursal but its chain is Ṣaḥīḥ. Refer to *Tahdīb al-Kamāl*, 35/255.

2 *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, Book on the prohibition of bloodshed, Chapter: The one who is killed defending his wealth, # 4087, al-Albānī declared it Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, # 1419, Book on blood money, Chapter: What has been related about blood money, # 1419.

The status of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم in the eyes of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan

The Khulāfā’ Rāshidīn and the Ṣaḥābah held a lofty position in the heart Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, as was the same for all of the Ahl al-Bayt.

Highlighting this is what has been narrated by al-Dāraquṭnī with his chain to Abū Khālid al-Aḥmar, who said:

سألت عبد الله بن الحسن عن أبي بكر وعمر فقال صلى الله عليهما ولا صلى على من لم يصل عليهما

I asked ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan about Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and he replied, “May Allah bless them and may Allah not bless the one who does not seek blessings for them.”¹

It is reported in *Tārīkh Dimashq* that he also said:

وإنهما ليعرضان على قلبي فأدعو الله لهما أتقرب به إلى الله عز وجل

I think of them and supplicate to Allah for them. I seek the closeness of Allah by doing this.²

1 Al-Dāraquṭnī: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, # 55. The meaning of the verse, “and invoke Allah’s blessings upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them,” Ṣūrah al-Tawbah: 103, means to supplicate to Allah for them. It has been reported from the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, “O Allah, I invoke your blessings for the family of Ibn Abī Awfā.” (Narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Zakāh, Chapter: Concerning the Imāms supplicating for the person who gives Ṣadaqah, # 63. It is also narrated from Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh that a woman said to the Rasūl of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, “Supplicate for me and my husband.” So the Rasūl of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “I invoke the blessings of Allah upon you and your husband. (Narrated by Abū Dāwūd, Book on Sūjūd found in the Qur’ān, Chapter: Regarding sending salutations on anyone besides the Rasūl of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, with a Ṣaḥīḥ chain of transmission.) These texts show us that the meaning of the Arabic word Ṣalāh is supplication. This is the meaning that Imām ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan رضي الله عنه intended.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/255.

It has also been narrated from Ḥaḥḥ ibn ‘Umar, the freed slave of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, that he said:

رأيت عبد الله بن حسن توضأ ومسح على خفيه قال فقلت له تمسح فقال نعم قد مسح عمر بن الخطاب
ومن جعل عمر بينه وبين الله فقد استوثق

I saw ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan performing ablution and he made *masah*¹ on his socks. I asked him, “Do you make *masah*?”

He replied, “Yes, because ‘Umar رضي الله عنه made *masah* and the person who trusts ‘Umar رضي الله عنه regarding matters between him and Allah, he has indeed found a great trust.”²

It has also been recorded in *Tārīkh Dimashq* that Ḥaḥḥ ibn Qays asked ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan regarding making *masah*:

امسح فقد مسح عمر بن الخطاب فقال إنما أسألك أنت أتمسح؟ فقال ذلك أعجز لك حين أخبرك عن
عمر وتسالني عن رأيي فعمر كان خيرا مني ومن ملء الأرض مثلي قلت يا أبا محمد إن ناسا يقولون إن
هذا منكم تقيّة فقال لي ونحن بين القبر والمنبر اللهم إن هذا قولي في السر والعلانية فلا تسمعنا قول أحد
بعدي ثم قال هذا الذي يزعم أن عليا كان مقهورا وأن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم أمره بأمر
فلم ينفذه فكفى بهذا إزاء علي وعلي ومنقصة أن يزعم قوم أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم أمره
بأمر فلم ينفذه

He replied, “Make *masah*, as ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb made *masah*.”

Ḥaḥḥ ibn Qays said, “I am asking if you make *masah*.”

He replied, “You would have understood that when I informed you that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb made *masah* and you still ask for my opinion. ‘Umar alone was better than me and a world filled with the likes of me.”

1 Passed wet hands over his leather socks.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq* 29/255.

I said, “O Abū Muḥammad, people will say that you only say this out of Taqiyyah.”

He replied, and we were between the grave of the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ and the pulpit of the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ, “O Allah, this is my opinion be it in secret or in public. So do not bring forth any other person’s opinion after this.”

He then said, “They think that ‘Alī was powerless and that the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ ordered him to do certain things and he did not do it. This is a great insult to ‘Alī. It is degrading to assume that the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ ordered him to do a certain thing and thereafter he did not do it.”¹

It has also been recorded in *Tārīkh Dimashq* from Muḥammad ibn Qāsim al-Asadī Abū Ibrāhīm that he said:

رأيت عبد الله بن الحسن بن الحسن بن علي ذكر قتل عثمان فبكى حتى بل لحيته وثوبه

I saw ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī mentioning the killing of ‘Uthmān and he cried until both his beard and clothes were wet.²

The Tolerance of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan and his Good Character

This honourable Sayyid possessed unsurpassed levels of tolerance, which is of the praiseworthy traits of the pious. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ashajj of the tribe of ‘Abd al-Qays:

إن فيك خصلتين يحبهما الله الحلم والأناة

You possess two qualities which are loved by Allah: Clemency and tolerance.³

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/256.

2 Ibid.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book on Īmān, Chapter: The command to believe in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, #25.

Ibn 'Asākir reports that a person maligned 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan but he just ignored him. When he was asked why he did not respond to him, he said:

لم أعرف مساوئه وكرهت بهته بما ليس فيه

I am not aware of his faults and I dislike to slander him with that which he does not have.

Ibn 'Asākir also reports from Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn that a man cursed 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan but he merely replied:

ما أنت كفؤ لي فأسب و لا انت عبدي فأشح

You are not my peer that I should curse, nor are you my slave that I should be resentful.¹

He said to a man who had once cursed him:

أظنّت سفاها من سفاهة رأيها	أن أهجو لما أن هجتني محارب
فلا و أبيها إني بعشيرتي	هنالك عن ذاك المقام لراغب

Has she assumed out of her foolish thinking that I will satirize her after Muḥārib satirised me?

Never, by the oath of my father, I, because of my noble family, am averse to taking that position.²

As astonishing example of his tolerance is, his interceding on behalf of the Banū Umayyah before 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās is even more amazing, as reported in *Tārīkh Dimashq* from al-Asma'ī who said:

عزم عبد الله بن علي على قتل بني أمية بالحجاز فقال له عبد الله بن الحسن بن الحسن يا ابن عم إذا
أسرعت في قتل أكفائك فمن تباهي بسلطانك فاعف يعف الله عنك، ففعل

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/258.

2 *Ibid.*

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī’ intended to slaughter all of the Banū Umayyah in Ḥijāz, so ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan said to him, “O my cousin, if you hasten in killing all of your equals then who will remain to savour your rule? Forgive and Allah will forgive you.” So he complied.²

This was the tolerance and humility of this revered Sayyid during a time when authority lay in their hands.

The status of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan in Society

Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan was held in high esteem by the Khalīfah Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik and the Righteous Khalīfah ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, who both acknowledged his virtue and status.

Ibn Asākir reports that ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan:

إن رأيت أن لا تأتي إلا في الساعة التي ترى أنه يؤذن لك فيها فافعل، فإني أخاف أن تقف ببابي فلا يؤذن لك

If you could only come to me during those times when you think you will be permitted [an audience] then please do so, as I fear that you will wait at my door and not given permission.³

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan was also told:

إن أمير المؤمنين -يعني سليمان بن عبد الملك- قد بلغه أن في العسكر مطعوناً فالحق بأهلك، أذن بك

The Amīr al-Mu‘minīn—Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik—has been informed that a plague has afflicted the army, so remain with your family, he wishes to protect you [from getting infected].⁴

1 ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās was a commander of the army forces of the Abbasid dynasty. He was killed during the reign of Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 27/380.

3 *Ibid*, 27/367.

4 *Ibid*, 27/366.

Illustrating his status during the reign of al-Saffāḥ al-‘Abbāsī is the report that one day al-Saffāḥ was touring the granaries, accompanied by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, impressing upon him the stores they had collected. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan said to him:

ألم تر حوشباً أمسى يبني	بيوتاً نفعها لبني نفيلة
يؤمل أن يعمر عمر نوح	وأمر الله يحدث كل ليلة

Do you not see that Ḥawshab has started to build houses from which the Banū Nufaylah will benefit.

He aspires to be granted the lifespan like the lifespan of Nūḥ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, whereas the decree of Allah occurs every night.

Abū al-‘Abbās al-Saffāḥ replied, “This is not what I intended.”

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan replied, “I intended to make you indifferent to this paltry gains which you have shown me.”¹

His sincere stance and courage when advising others and stating the truth is revealed to us.

Al-Mizzī has reported in *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*:

أن أبا العباس السفاح قد خص عبد الله (المحض) ابن الحسن بن الحسن بالمجالسة والمحاذثة ومزيد من الإكرام؛ ولكنه كان دائم السؤال له عن ابنه محمداً وإبراهيم (وذلك لسعي الوشاة بأنهما يعزمان الخروج عليه) فقال له ما خلفهما عني فلم يفدا علي مع من وفد عليّ من أهلهم وكان يعيد عليه المسألة دائماً، فشكا ذلك عبد الله بن الحسن إلى أخيه الحسن بن الحسن (المثلث) فقال له: إن أعاد عليك المسألة عنهما، فقل له: علمهما عند عمهما، فلما سأله أبو العباس قال: علمهما يا أمير المؤمنين عند عمهما، فبعث أبو العباس إلى الحسن فسأله عنهما، فقال: يا أمير المؤمنين أكلمك على هيئة الخلافة أو كما يكلم الرجل ابن عمه، فقال أبو العباس: بل كما يكلم الرجل عمه، فقال له الحسن: أنشدك الله يا أمير المؤمنين إن قدر الله لمحمد وإبراهيم يلياً من هذا الأمر شيئاً فجهدت، وجهد أهل الأرض معك أن تردوا ما قدر لهما أيردونه، قال: لا، قال: فما تنغيصك على هذا الشيخ النعمة التي أنعمت بها عليه، فقال أبو العباس: لا أذكرها بعد اليوم، فما ذكرها حتى فرّق الموت بينهما

1 *Tārīkh Baḡhdād*, 9/421.

Abū al-‘Abbās al-Saffāḥ gave special attention to sitting and conversing with ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan and honouring him, but he would continue questioning ‘Abd Allāh about his two sons, Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, due to spies informing him that they intended to rise against him. He said to al-Maḥḍ, “What is keeping them away from me, they did not come to me with those of their family that came to me.” He would ask this question all the time. So ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan complained of this to his brother Ḥasan (al-Muthallath) ibn Ḥasan who said to him, “If he asks you this again then tell him that their uncle knows more about them.”

The next time Abū al-‘Abbās asked al-Maḥḍ, he replied, “Their uncle knows about them.” So Abū al-‘Abbās summoned Ḥasan to ask him about them. Ḥasan said, “I implore you by Allah, O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, if Allah has preordained that Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm should take charge of this affair and you in return endeavour along with all the people on the earth to prevent it, will you all be able to prevent it?” Abū al-‘Abbās replied, “No, [we will not be able to].” Ḥasan then said, “Then why this embitterment towards this Shaykh for the bounties he has been granted?” Abū al-‘Abbās replied, “I will never bring it up after today.” And he did not mention it again until they were separated by death.¹

Honouring the scholars

Only the virtuous are truly capable of recognising virtue, and that is why this Saint has recognised the status and virtue of the scholars. An example is the respect and veneration he awarded to the famous Tābī‘ī Ṭāwus ibn Kaysān, the student of Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. It is reported in *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*:

توفي طاوس بالمزدلفة أو بمنى فلما حُمِلَ أخذ عبد الله بن الحسن بن الحسن بن علي بقائمة السرير فما زايه حتى بلغ القبر

1 Al-Mizzī: *Tadhīb al-Kamāl*, biography of Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā, #6/85; *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 7/293.

Ṭāwus passed away in Muzdalifah or Minā, and when his bier was lifted ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan held one of the handles and did not let go until his bier reached the grave.”¹

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ narrates that ‘Abd al-Razzāq reported from his father:

مات طائوس بمكة فلم يصلوا عليه حتى بعث ابن هشام بالحرس، قال: فلقد رأيت عبد الله بن الحسن واضعاً السرير على كاهله، قال: فلقد سقطت قلنسوة كانت عليه، ومزق رداؤه من خلفه

Ṭawus passed away in Makkah and no one read the funeral prayer upon him until Ibn Hishām sent a royal escort. I saw ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan carrying his bier on his back, such that the hat he was wearing even fell from his head; and his robe tore at the back.²

Also highlighting his respect and veneration of the scholars is the report transmitted by Ibn ‘Asākir رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ from Ḥammād ibn Zayd:

كنا مع أيوب السخيتاني بمكة جلوساً فسلم عليه رجل من خلفه، فالتفت إليه بجسده كله، فسلم عليه تسليمًا خفيفاً، ثم التفت إليه وقد دمعت عيناه فلم يزل منكساً حتى قام، فلما قام قلت: يا أبا بكر، من الرجل الذي سلمت عليه؟ قال: ابن النبي، ابن النبي، عبد الله بن الحسن

We were sitting in the company of Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī in Makkah when a person greeting him from behind. He then turned towards him with his entire body and greeted him softly. I then turned to him and his eyes were welled up with tears. He continued keeping his head lowered until he stood up. When he stood, I asked, “O Abū Bakr, who is the man who greeted you?” He answered, “The [great grand] son of the Nabī, the [great grand] son of the Nabī; ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan.”³

1 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā*, 4/3.

2 *Ibid*.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/254.

One can gauge from this report the admiration and honour ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan awarded to Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, greeting him from behind out of respect for him. It also makes apparent the love this esteemed Tābī‘ī, Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, had for the Ahl al-Bayt رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. And this was the character and practice of all our scholars; recognising the rights of the Ahl al-Bayt and thus fulfilling the bequest of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also bless us with the same love and admiration for the Ahl al-Bayt.

Wise sayings of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan

Amongst the wise sayings said by him which can be seen as a reflection of the Prophetic wisdom inherited by him:

إياك وعداوة الرجال، فإنك لا تأمن مكر الحليم ولا مبادأة اللئيم

Save yourself from the enmity of men, for you will never be safe from the plot of the patient nor the endeavours of the wicked.¹

المراء يفسد الصداقة القديمة ويحل العُقدَ الوثيقة، وأقل ما فيه أن تكون المغالبة، والمغالبة أمتن أسباب القطيعة

Disputes destroy old friendships and unties firm bonds. The most that they result in is defeating the next person, and the desire to defeat is the strongest cause of severing ties.²

Also amongst them is his statement when describing one person :

كان كثير الصواب قليل الإحالة، يحدثك بالحديث على مدارجة، يخبرك بالخبر على مطاويه

He was mostly accurate in his speech, and hardly corrupted it. He would converse with you according to the accepted and established ways of speech. And he would inform you of an event with all its finer details.³

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 29/259; *Kashf al-Ghumma*, 3/189.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

He said to his son Muḥammad:

يا بني، إني مؤد إلى الله حقه عليّ في نصيحتك فأد إلى الله حقه عليك في الاستماع والقبول، يا بني، كف الأذى، وأفض الندى واستعن على السلامة بطول الصمت في المواطن التي تدعوك نفسك إلى الكلام فيها، فإن الصمت حسن على كل حال، وللمرء ساعات يضر فيهن خطؤه ولا ينفع صوابه، واعلم أن من أعظم الخطأ العجلة قبل الإمكان، والأناة بعد الفرصة. يا بني، احذر الجاهل، وإن كان لك ناصحاً، كما تحذر العاقل، وإن كان لك عدواً فيوشك أن يورطك بمشورته في بعض اغترارك، فيسبق إليك مكر العاقل، وإياك ومعاداة الرجال، فإنها لا تعدم مكر حلم أو مبادأة جاهل

O my son, I am fulfilling the right of Allah on me in advising you, so you fulfil the right of Allah upon you by listening and accepting it. O my son, do not harm, be generous, and seek integrity by being silent in places where your ego encourages you to speak, for silence is best in all conditions. A man has times wherein his blunders will harm him and his feats will be of no avail. Know well that the gravest of errors is hastiness before capability and passivity after opportunity. O my son, be wary of the ignorant even if he is your well-wisher just as you should be wary of the intelligent when he is your enemy, for he might entangle you [in difficulty] by his advice in your delusion and his plot overwhelm you. Save yourself from the enmity of men, for verily it is not void of the plotting of the patient or the endeavours of the ignorant.¹

Poetry of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan

Abū al-‘Abbās al-Saffāḥ replied to him when he wrote to him:

عذيري من خليلي من مراد	أريد حياته ويريد قتلي
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*I desire that he lives and he desires to kill me. Is there anyone who will excuse me regarding my friend from Murād.*²

1 Tārīkh Dimashq, 29/266.

2 Tahdhāb al-Kamāl, biography of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan.

He sought to conceal the whereabouts of his sons, Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, who intended to overthrow him. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ replied to him:

بمترلة النياط من الفؤاد	وكيف تريد ذاك وأنت منه
وأنت لهاشم رأس وهاد	وكيف تريد ذاك وأنت منه
وزندك حين تقدح من زنادي	وكيف تريد ذاك وأنت منه

How can you intend that when you are to him like the heart is to the bosom.

How can you intend that when you are from him, and you are a leader and a guide to the Banū Hāshim

How can you intend that when you are from him, and when the fire stick with which you ignite your fire is from my fire sticks.¹

He also wrote:

إلا وقد سامناه أخوتنا	لم يبق شيئاً يسامه أحد
الضيم أن تستباح حرمتنا	فوجدونا نخشى الدمار ونأبى
وتلك غداً أيضاً وصيتنا	بذاك أوصى من قبل والدنا

There is nothing that anyone can be afflicted with, but that our brothers have afflicted us with them.

But they found that we fear for our families and that we refuse to accept transgression and to allow our rights to be violated.

Our father advised us of this previously and this will remain our advice for tomorrow as well.²

Trials and Demise

The world is a place of tests and trials, and not our eternal abode; the scholars being the inheritors of the Prophets they too are tested in a similar manner as the Prophets. Such was to be the fate of this esteemed illustrious scholar as well, by which his status was elevated and his errors forgiven.

1 Tārīkh Dimashq, 29/260.

2 Tārīkh Dimashq, 29/259.

The trials already began during the era of Abū al-‘Abbās al-Saffāḥ but he overlooked it and paid very little attention to it; however, Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr—may Allah deal with him as he deserves—imprisoned ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, Ḥasan al-Muthallath, and Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥasan in an attempt to subjugate the sons of ‘Abd Allāh, Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, who were intending to rebel against his rule. Also imprisoned with ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ was his uterine brother, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, known as al-Dībāj. They passed away in 145 A.H while imprisoned. ‘Abd Allāh was 75 years old at the time.¹

We now refer to Ibn Kathīr who will relate to us this tragic tale.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ

And never think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare [in horror].²

ألح المنصور على عبد الله في طلب ولديه فغضب عبد الله من ذلك، وقال: والله لو كانا تحت قدمي ما دلتك عليهما، فغضب المنصور وأمر بسجنه، وأمر ببيع رقيقه وأمواله، فلبث في السجن ثلاث سنين، وأشاروا على المنصور بحبس بني حسن عن آخرهم فحبسهم، وجد في طلب إبراهيم ومحمد جداً، هذا وهما يحضران الحج، في غالب الأوقات، ولا يشعر بهما من ينم عليهما ولله الحمد، والمنصور يعزل نائباً عن المدينة ويولي عليها غيره، ويحرضه على إمساكهما والفحص عنهما، وبذل الأموال في طلبهما، وتعجزه المقادير عنهما لما يريد الله عز وجل. وقد واطأهما على أمرهما أمير من أمراء المنصور يقال له: أبو العساكر خالد بن حسان، فعزموا في بعض الحججات على الفتك بالمنصور بين الصفا والمروة فنهأهم عبد الله بن الحسن لشرف البقعة، وقد اطلع المنصور على ذلك وعلم بما مالأهما ذلك الأمير، فعذبه حتى أقر بما كانوا تاملثوا عليه من الفتك به، فقال: وما الذي صرفكم عن ذلك فقال: عبد الله بن الحسن، نهانا عن ذلك، فأمر به الخليفة فغيب في الأرض فلم يظهر حتى الآن، وقد استشار المنصور من يعلم من أمرائه ووزرائه من ذوي الرأي في أمر ابني عبد الله بن الحسن، وبعث الجواسيس والقصاد في البلاد فلم يقع لهما على خبر، ولم يظهر لهما على عين ولا أثر، والله غالب على أمره، وقد جاء محمد بن عبد الله بن حسن إلى أمه فقال: يا أمه إني قد شفقت على أبي وعمومتي، ولقد هممت أن أضع يدي في يد هؤلاء، لأريح أهلي فذهبت أمه إلى السجن فعرضت عليهم ما قال ابنها فقالوا: لا ولا كرامة بل نصبر على أمره، فلعن الله لفتح على يديه خيرا، ونحن نصبر وفرجنا بيد الله إن شاء فرح عنا وإن شاء ضيق، وتمثلوا كلهم

1 Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb, # 3274.

2 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 42.

على ذلك رضي الله عنهم. ونقل آل حسن من حبس المدينة إلى حبس بالعراق، وفي أرجلهم القيود، وفي أعناقهم الأغلال، وكان ابتداء تقييدهم من الربذة بأمر أبي جعفر المنصور، وقد أشخص معهم محمد بن عبد الله العثماني، وكان أبا عبد الله بن حسن لأمه، وكانت ابنته تحت إبراهيم بن عبد الله بن حسن وقد حملت قريباً فاستحضر الخليفة وقال: قد حلفت بالعراق والطلاق إنك لم تغشني وهذه ابنتك حامل فإن كان من زوجها فقد حبلت منه، وأنت تعلم به وإن كان من غيره فأنت ديوت، فأجابه العثماني بجواب أحفظه به، فأمر به فجردت عنه ثيابه فإذا جسمه مثل الفضة النقية، ثم ضربه بين يديه مائة وخمسون سوطاً منها ثلاثون فوق رأسه أصاب أحدها عينه فسالت، ثم رده إلى السجن، وقد بقي كأنه عبد أسود رزقه الضرب وتراكم الدماء فوق جلده فأجلس إلى جانب أخيه لأمه عبد الله بن الحسن فاستسقى ماءً فمما جسر أحد أن يسقيه حتى سقاه خراساني من جملة الجلاوزة الموكلين بهم ثم ركب المنصور هودجه وأركبوا أولئك في محامل ضيقة وعليهم القيود والأغلال فاجتاز بهم المنصور وهو في هودجه فناداه عبد الله بن الحسن: والله يا أبا جعفر ما هكذا صنعنا بأسراكم يوم بدر، فأخسأ ذلك المنصور وثقل عليه ونفر عنهم، ولما انتهوا إلى العراق حبسوا بالهاشمية، وكان فيهم محمد بن إبراهيم بن عبد الله بن الحسن وكان جميلاً فنيا فكان الناس يذهبون، لينظروا إلى حسنه وجماله، وكان يقال له: الديباج الأصغر فأحضره المنصور بين يديه وقال له: أما لأقتلنك قتلة ما قتلتها أحداً، ثم ألقاه بين اسطوانتين، وسد عليه حتى مات، فعلى المنصور من الله سبحانه ما يستحقه

ثم قال وقد هلك كثير منهم في السجن حتى فرج عنهم بعد هلاك المنصور، فكان فيمن هلك في السجن عبد الله بن الحسن بن الحسن بن علي بن أبي طالب، وقد قيل: والأظهر أنه قتل صبراً، وأخوه إبراهيم بن الحسن وغيرهم وقل من خرج منهم من الحبس وقد جعلهم المنصور في سجن لا يسمعون فيه أذاناً، ولا يعرفون فيه وقت صلاة إلا بالتلاوة، ثم بعث أهل خراسان يشفعون في محمد بن عبد الله العثماني، فأمر به فضربت عنقه وأرسل برأسه إلى أهل خراسان لا جزاءه الله خيراً، ورحم الله محمد بن عبد الله العثماني

Al-Manṣūr continued badgering ‘Abd Allāh about the whereabouts of his sons, which angered ‘Abd Allāh, who said, “By Allah, even if they were beneath my feet I would not inform you.” This angered al-Manṣūr who had him imprisoned, and his properties and assets sold. ‘Abd Allāh remained in prison for three years. Al-Manṣūr also had the children of Ḥasan imprisoned and maximized his efforts to find Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm. He did all of this while they were both present for Ḥajj most of the time, and none who would betray them recognised them—and all praise belongs to Allah.

Al-Manṣūr dismissed his governor of Madīnah and appointed someone else, who he pressured to detain them and investigate into their affairs. Al-Manṣūr spent much money towards that end but to no avail.

One of the Amīrs of al-Manṣūr called Abū al-Asākīr Khālīd ibn Ḥassān conspired with them to kill al-Manṣūr between Ṣafā and Marwah during one of the Ḥajjs. However ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan prohibited them from carrying this out due to the sanctity of the place. Al-Manṣūr was informed about the conspiracy and tortured the Amīr until he confessed to his role in it.

Al-Manṣūr asked him, “Who is the one who prevented you all from carrying it out?”

“‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan,” came the reply.

The Khalīfah then ordered him to be executed and he was buried in the earth, and his whereabouts have not been disclosed until now.

Al-Manṣūr enquired from his governors and viziers about any information concerning Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, even sending out spies and detectives to the various cities but they learnt nothing, nor found any trace of them. *And Allah is predominant over His affair.*

Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan came to his mother and said, “O my mother, I feel for my father and uncles, and think that I should pledge myself to these people so that my family may be released.”

His mother went to the prison and related what her son had said to her.

They all said, “Never, not even as a kind gesture. We will remain patient and Allah will make a way for us. If Allah wishes He will free us, and if He wishes He will restrict us.” All of them inclined to the same.

The family of Ḥasan were then moved from the prisons of Madīnah to the prisons of Iraq, with fetters and chains around their necks and feet. They were bound from Rabdhah on the order of al-Manṣūr. Also imprisoned with them was Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Uthmānī, who was the uterine brother of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, and his daughter was married to

his nephew Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, and she had just recently conceived. Al-Manṣūr had him brought before him and said, “I promise to set you free if you do not deceive me. And this is your daughter who is with child; if she is married then the child is his and you know of his whereabouts, and if the child is from another then you are a cuckold.” The ‘Uthmānī replied in a way that concealed their whereabouts. So al-Manṣūr ordered that he be punished, his clothes were thus removed and his body was gleaming like pure silver; he was then given 150 lashes, 30 of which were above his head. One stuck his eye and blinded him. He was then returned to his cell and he [now] looked like a black slave due to the bruises and lashes. He was seated next to his brother ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan. He asked for water but no one dared give it to him until one Khurāsānī guard from amongst them gave it to them.

Al-Manṣūr then mounted his carriage and loaded them into a narrow carriage with them tied in chains and fetters. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan called out to al-Manṣūr while he was in his carriage, “By Allah, O Abū Ja‘far, this is not how we treated your captives on the day of Badr.” Al-Manṣūr was humiliated by this, and felt it heavy so he distanced himself from them.

When they reached Iraq they were imprisoned with the Hāshimīs, amongst them was Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan who was an extremely handsome youngster to whom people would flock to gaze at his handsomeness. He was called al-Dībāj al-Aṣghar. Al-Manṣūr had him brought before him and said to him, “I will kill you in a way that no one before you has been killed,” and he then had him placed between two columns which were pressed on him till he passed. May Allah inflict upon al-Manṣūr what he deserves.

(Ibn Kathīr said.) Most of them died in prison and only after al-Manṣūr’s death were those who survived finally released. Amongst those who passed away in person was ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. It has also been said that he was executed as was his brother, Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥasan, and others. Few were those who survived and were later released.

Al-Manṣūr had imprisoned them in a cell where they could neither hear the Adhān or discern the times of ṣalāh.

The people of Khurāsān interceded for Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Uthmānī, but he was executed instead. His head was severed and sent to the people of Khurāsān. May Allah not give al-Manṣūr a good return and shower his mercy on Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Uthmānī.¹

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī transmits to us another dreadful tale. When Fāṭimah bint ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan crossed paths with Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr—may Allah give him what he deserves—when he was on his way to perform Ḥajj, she recited the following couplets:

في السجن بين سلاسل وقيود	ارحم كبيراً سنه متهدم
يتموا لفقدك لا لفقد يزيد	وارحم صغار بني يزيد فإنهم
ما جدنا من جدكم ببعيد	إن جدت بالرحم القرية بيننا

Have mercy on an elderly man whose age is dwindling in prison in shackles and chains.

And have mercy upon the children of Banū Yazīd, for they have become orphans because of losing me and not because of losing Yazīd.

If you are gracious today because of the close kinship between us, our grandfather was not a far relative of your grandfather.

Abū Ja‘far thus said, “You have reminded me of him,” then he ordered that he be taken to the basement, and that was the last time we had heard of him.²

As for their brother al-Dībāj, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān al-Umawī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī, who was known as al-Dībāj (silk) on account of his handsomeness; his mother was Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī.

1 *Al-Bidāyāh wa al-Nihāyāh*, 10/81.

2 *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 9/433.

He narrates Ḥadīth from his father and mother, and from his Khārījah bint Zayd, Ṭāwūs, Abū al-Zinād, al-Zuhrī, Nāfi', and others. A group of people have narrated from him. He has been deemed reliable by al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Ḥibbān. He was the uterine brother of 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan and his daughter, Ruqayyah, was married to his nephew, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd Allāh. She was an extremely beautiful lady, and on account of her [marriage to Ibrāhīm] Muḥammad al-'Uthmānī was killed by Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr. He was kind, generous, and praiseworthy. Zubayr al-Bakkār related that Sulaymān ibn 'Abbās al-Sa'dī recited the following couplets to him:

وجدنا المحض الأبيض من قريش	فتى بين الخليفة والرسول
أتاك المجد من هنا وهناك	و كنت له بمعتلج السيول
فما للمجد دونك من مبيت	وما للمجد دونك مقيل
فلا يمحض وراءك يبتغيه	ولا هو قابل بك من بديل

We find the pure and the fair youngster of Quraysh, to be a youngster between a leader and a prophet.

Glory came to you from here and from there, when you were in obtaining it at a clashing point of the floods.

Now, without you, it does not spend a night. And now, without you, it does not spend a day.

It will not go on after you, nor would it accept a substitute to replace you.

Muḥammad (al-Dībāj) was loved dearly by his brother 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan. Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī reported from 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā:

أبغضت محمد بن عبد الله بن عمرو بن عثمان أيام وُلِدَ بغضاً ما أبغضته أحداً قط ثم كبر وبرّني فأحببته
حياً ما أحببته أحداً قط

I loathed Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn 'Uthmān when he was born, I hated him more than I ever loathed anyone. Then when he grew older, he [still] honoured me and as a result I never loved anyone as much as I loved him.¹

1 Tārīkh Baghdād, 3/276.

Allegations and its Refutation

Ignorance, jealousy, and personal motives have resulted in a number of false allegations being cast upon these two illustrious stars of the Ahl al-Bayt. We will begin by first refuting those allegations that have been made against Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and thereafter those about his son, Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

Allegations against Ḥasan al-Muthannā

A few allegations have been made against Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, amongst which are:

1. Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ (allegedly) cursed Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, thus tarnishing his reliability—according to the Shī‘ah—and rendering him disparaged according to them.
2. It has been attributed to Jā‘far al-Šādiq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that he said concerning Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, “He is better suited for Judaism,” and that he drinks wine. It is also claimed that he said, “If Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan were to die while fornicating or consuming wine and ribā, it would still be better than what he will die upon.”

These are a few of the false allegations made against this illustrious Imām. The response to it is as follows:

The alleged dispute between Ḥasan al-Muthannā and ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn

The alleged dispute between Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ—as reported by al-Mufīd—is as follows:

وقف على الإمام علي بن الحسين عليهما السلام رجل فأسمعه وشتمه، فلم يكلمه فلما انصرف قال لجلسائه: قد سمعتم ما قال هذا الرجل، وأنا أحب أن تبلغوا معي إليه حتى تسمعوا ردي عليه قالوا له نفعل

ولقد كنا نحب أن تقول له ونقول قال فأخذ نعليه ومشى وهو يقول وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ
 وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ سورة آل عمران: ١٣٤، فعلمنا أنه لا يقول له شيئاً فخرج حتى أتى منزل الرجل
 فصرخ به فقال قولوا له هذا علي بن الحسين قال فخرج إلينا متوثباً للشر وهو لا يشك أنه إنما جاء مكافئاً
 له على بعض ما كان منه فقال له علي بن الحسين عليهما السلام يا أخي إنك كنت قد وقفت عليّ آنفاً فقلت
 وقلت فإن كنت قلت ما فيّ فاستغفر الله منه وإن كنت قلت ما ليس فيّ فغفر الله لك فقَبَلَ الرجل بين عينيه
 وقال بل قلت فيك ما ليس فيك وأنا أحق به

قال الراوي للحديث والرجل هو الحسن بن علي يعني الحسن المثنى

A man came to Imām ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn and began rebuking him and cursing him, but ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn did not reply.

When the man left, ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn said to those sitting with him, “You heard what this man said, and I would like you to accompany me to him so that you may hear my response to him.”

They said, “Go ahead, we would love for you to respond to him, and we too say something to him.”

So he wore his shoes and began walking while reciting the verse:

وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

*Who restrain anger and who pardon the people—and Allah loves the doers of good.*¹

And we knew he would not respond to him. The man came out to us expecting trouble, having no doubt that he had come to retaliate for what he had done to him earlier. However, ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn said to him, “O my brother, You came to me earlier and you said things and said things; if what you said about me is true then I repent from it and if you attributed to me that which is not in me then may Allah forgive you.”

1 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 134.

So the man kissed him between his eyes and said, “Rather, I attributed to you what you do not possess, and I am more deserving [of being described that way].”

The narrator says, “The man was Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī¹, i.e. Ḥasan al-Muthannā.”

All we can say is this is the long and short of the disagreement between these two first cousins; do you think it is sufficient for eternal damnation?

Furthermore, the narration itself—if we assume it to be authentic—mentions that they reconciled and ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ forgave him, to the extent that Ḥasan al-Muthannā even kissed him between his eyes. Would it be justified after this to still disparage him? In fact, deliberately forget the blood relations between them—first cousins and brothers-in-law—as we have alluded to earlier,² not forgetting the fact that they stood side by side at Karbalā’ [and were among the few survivors]. Would all this be forgotten now due to a single quarrel—assuming that it did occur—and no longer be regarded as an Imām from the Ahl al-Bayt or an esteemed scholar from the erudite. No adherent of the truth having sound mental capacity will accept that!

How can we accept this narration when Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā—the narrator of this incident—is a *Kadhāb* (profound liar) who brazenly fabricates narrations; as stated by Ibn al-Ghaḍā’irī³. Abū al-Qāsim al-Khūṭī said about him in *Mu’jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*:

فلا ينبغي الريب في ضعف الرجل

There should be no doubt in declaring him weak.⁴

1 Mufīd: *Al-Irshād*, 2/145-146.

2 We have already mentioned that Ḥasan al-Muthannā was married to Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn, sister of ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn, and in turn Umm ‘Abd Allāh—the sister of Ḥasan al-Muthannā—was married to ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn, making them brothers-in-law twice.

3 *Rijāl Ibn al-Ghaḍā’irī*, pg. 54, biography: 41.

4 *Mu’jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, # 3132.

When this is the state of this report, can it ever be used to besmear the pure eminent leaders of the Ahl al-Bayt?

The allegation of consuming wine and the alleged disparagement of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq

As for the second allegation, al-Ṭabarsī states in his *al-Itijāj*:

عن أبي يعقوب، قال: لقيت أنا والمعلی بن خنيس الحسن بن الحسن بن علي بن أبي طالب (عليهم السلام)، فقال لي: يا يهودي فأخبرنا بما قال فينا، جعفر بن محمد (عليه السلام)، فقال (عليه السلام): هو والله أولى باليهودية منكما إن اليهودي من شرب الخمر

It is reported from Abū Ya'qūb that he said: Al-Mu'allā ibn Khunays and I met Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and he said to me, "O Jew!" So we related what he said to Ja'far ibn Muḥammad عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who said, "By Allah, he is closer to Judaism than the two of you; verily one who consumes wine is a Jew."

It is also reported that he said:

لو توفي الحسن ابن الحسن على الزنا والربا وشرب الخمر كان خيرا له مما توفي عليه

If Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan were to have died while fornicating, taking interest, and consuming wine; it still would have been better than what he died upon.¹

Responding to the allegation of consuming wine and the alleged disparagement of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq

The narration reported by al-Ṭabarsī in *al-Ihtijāj* has been reported without a *isnād* (chain of narration), as mentioned himself in the introduction of his book. The importance of an *isnād* needs no elucidation; 'Abd Allāh ibn Mubārak would say:

1 *Al-Ihtijāj*, pg. 375; *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, 3/214-215.

إن الإسناد من الدين، ولولا الإسناد لقال من شاء ما شاء

Isnād is part of dīn, had there been no such thing as an isnād then anyone would be able to say whatever he wished.¹

Abū ‘Alī al-Jiyānī said:

بلغني أن الله خص هذه الأمة بثلاثة أشياء، لم يعطها من قبلها من الأمم: الإسناد والأنساب والإعراب

It has reached me that Allah has favoured this Ummah with three specialities that were not granted to any other: Isnād, *Ansāb* (genealogy), and *I’rāb* (diacritics).²

Thus we can see that without the chains of transmission the very foundations of Islam would have been eroded and those seeking to destroy it would have been capable of fabricating whatever they desired. Hence we say that any tradition that is void of an isnād is worthless and would result in all forms of falsities and oddities being attributed to the dīn and its illustrious personalities. It is indeed the favour of Allah that this is one of the specialities of this Ummah.

In addition to this report having no isnād—and discarded as a result—we know for a fact that Ḥasan al-Muthannā is *Thiqah* (reliable) and *Ma’mūn* (trustworthy)³; how then is it possible for him to be also described with these deplorable characteristics?

It is also known that Ḥasan al-Muthannā passed away in the year 97 A.H which is before Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq was even born, as he was only born in the year 116 A.H.⁴

In addition, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq is far too virtuous to have described a person from the illustrious family of the Prophet ﷺ as a Jew, let alone still accusing him of consuming wine and dying on falsehood merely on account of diverse views.

1 *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, introduction, pg. 32.

2 Khatīb al-Baghdādī: *Sharaf Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth*, pg. 40, # 69.

3 *Al-Irshād*, 2/23.

4 *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, 3/215.

Furthermore, al-Tusturī has reported:

و المراد بشر به الخمر النبيذ الذي خمر عند أئمتنا - عليهم السلام - ويحلّه غيرهم في الأكثر

The meaning of drinking wine is the consumption of Nabīdh which has fermented; it is considered as Ḥarām by our A'immah and many others deem it Ḥalāl.¹

This will be discussed further when dealing with the same accusation made against 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan. Al-Tusturī has attempted to respond to this allegation in *Qāmūs al-Rijāl* but did not do so successfully, as he just attributed this claim to Ḥasan al-Muthallath ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā instead, who is also an esteemed, devout, scholar of the Ahl al-Bayt. We have already mentioned that he passed away while being imprisoned with his brothers at the age of 68. Ibn Ḥibbān says about him in *Mashāhīr 'Ulamā' al-Amṣār*:

من قراء أهل البيت و عبادهم

Amongst the Qurrā' of the Ahl al-Bayt, and their ascetics.²

It is obligatory to love all of the Ahl al-Bayt, in keeping with the bequest of the Prophet ﷺ and the right he has upon us. We should not disparage these esteemed personalities based upon assumptions and hearsay, **as one whose virtue is established with certainty will not be disparaged by fallacies.** More so, when al-Ṭabarsī is well-known for extremism and prejudice; such that he has not left even the Book of Allah without disparagement and claiming it to be distorted, Allah forbid. In fact, his arrows were directed to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ themselves and the general populace of the Muslims as well; how then can anyone rely upon his narrations? Al-Ṭabarsī believes that whenever Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

1 *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, 3/215. The same has been attributed to Ḥasan al-Muthallath by al-Khūṭī in *Mu'jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, 5/289, after which he states, "Both these narrations due to the break in its chain cannot be relied upon."

2 *Mashāhīr 'Ulamā' al-Amṣār*, 1/62.

mentioned a sin in the Qur'ān He also mentioned alongside it the names of those who would perpetrate that sin. However, the Ṣaḥābah erased these names leaving only the story in its place. He says:

إن الكناية عن أسماء أصحاب الجرائم العظيمة من المنافقين في القرآن، ليست من فعله تعالى، وإنما من فعل المغيرين والمبدلين الذين جعلوا القرآن عضيبي، واعتاضوا الدنيا من الدين

The indirect reference to the names of the criminals responsible for the aghast crimes—from the hypocrites—is not the act of Allah, the Exalted. It is the act of those who distorted and altered (the Qur'an) and chose the transitory world over the dīn.¹

He continues warning that Taqiyyah demands that this not be proliferated:

وليس يسوغ مع عموم التقية التصريح بأسماء المبدلين، ولا الزيادة في آياته على ما أثبتوه من تلقائهم في الكتاب، لما في ذلك من تقوية حجج أهل التعطيل، والكفر، والملل المنحرفة عن قبلتنا، وإبطال هذا العلم الظاهر، الذي قد استكان له الموافق والمخالف بوقوع الاصطلاح على الائتمار لهم والرضا بهم، ولأن أهل الباطل في القديم والحديث أكثر عددا من أهل الحق

It is inappropriate—due to the generality of Taqiyyah—to explicitly mention the names of the distorters or add on to the verses which they have established in the Book as this will strengthen the proofs of those who wish to annihilate (Islam), the disbelievers, and those who do not adhere to our Qiblah. It will also lead to the elimination of this outward knowledge, which has been accepted by those who agree as well as the opposition, as some kind of agreement has been reached as far as obeying them and being happy with them. Also because the deviants—previously and in the future—are more in number than the adherents of the truth.²

1 *Al-Iḥtijāj*, 1/371.

2 *Ibid.*

Allegations against ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ

Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ has also had a number of baseless allegations cast against him, resulting in him being unfairly maligned and disparaged.

1. ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ claimed to possess the sword of the Prophet

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

They claim that ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ claimed to possess the sword of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, a claim that was belied by Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Al-Ṣaffār reports in *Baṣā‘ir al-Darajāt* from Sulaymān ibn Hārūn:

العجلية يقولون رهطان سيف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله عند عبد الله بن الحسن قال والله ما رآه ولا رآه أبوه الذي ولده إلا أن يكون عند علي بن الحسين ان صاحب هذا الامر لمحفوظ ومحفوظ له فلا يذهبن يميننا ولا شمالا فان الأمر واضح

He asked, “Two groups of the ‘Ajaliyyah are saying that the sword of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is in the possession of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan.”

Imām Ja‘far replied, “By Allah, he has not seen it, nor has his father seen it except when it was with ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn. Verily the master of this matter guards it and it is safe with him; so do not move to the right or to the left, for the matter is clear.”¹

2. ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ claimed that ‘Alī was not an Imām

Al-Ṣaffār reports in *Baṣā‘ir al-Darajāt* from Muḥammad ibn Muslim that Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq mentioned that ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ would say rewarding Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he was not the Imām until he rose up and drew his sword; and also that anyone from the Quraysh can be the Imām.²

1 *Baṣā‘ir al-Darajāt*, pg. 174, section 4.

2 *Ibid*, pg. 155, section 4.

كنت جالسا عند أبي عبد الله عليه السلام وعنده محمد بن عبد الله بن علي إلى جنبه جالسا، وفي المجلس عبد الملك بن أعين ومحمد الطيار وشهاب بن عبد ربه، فقال رجل من أصحابنا: جعلت فداك، إن عبد الله بن الحسن يقول: لنا في هذا الامر ما ليس لغيرنا! فقال أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام) بعد كلام: أما تعجبون من عبد الله يزعم أن أباه علي لم يكن إماما، ويقول: إنه ليس لنا علم. وصدق والله ما عنده علم

I was sitting with Abū ‘Abd Allāh (al-Ṣādiq عليه السلام) and sitting next to him was Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī. In the gathering were also ‘Abd al-Malik ibn A‘yan, Muḥammad al-Ṭayyār, and Shihāb ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī.

One of our companions said, “May I be sacrificed for you, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan says, ‘We have in this matter what others do not have.’”

After a few words Abū ‘Abd Allāh said, “Are you not surprised by ‘Abd Allāh who thinks that his [great grand] father, ‘Alī, was not an Imām, and that we do not have any knowledge. He has spoken the truth, by Allah, he does not have any knowledge.”¹

3. ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ differed in certain jurisprudic rulings

4. ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ praised ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb

Refuting the Allegations against Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ

As for those narrations in which Sayyidunā Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq disparages Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ—his cousin both paternally and maternally—they are all unfounded and highly improbable. These illustrious personalities are far above such petty statements and squabbles. Testifying to this is what is reported in *Bihār al-Anwār*:

إن أباه عبد الله جعفر بن محمد (عليه السلام)، كتب إلى عبد الله بن الحسن - رضي الله عنه - حين حمل هو وأهل بيته يعزيه عما صار إليه : بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم. إلى الخلف الصالح والذرية الطيبة من ولد أخيه وابن عمه، أما بعد فلأن كنت قد تفردت أنت وأهل بيتك ممن حمل معك بما أصابكم ما انفردت بالحزن والغیظ والكآبة وألم وجع القلب دوني ولقد نالني من ذلك الجزع والقلق وحر المصيبة مثل ما نالك ولكن رجعت إلى ما أمر الله جل وعز به المتقين من الصبر وحسن العزاء

1 Ibid, pg. 153.

Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام wrote to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan when he and his family were taken captive, sympathizing with what they were going through. [He wrote:]

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

To the noble descendant and the pure progeny

From the son of your brother and cousin.

While you and your Ahl al-Bayt who were taken with you might be facing the difficulties you are facing alone, I share in your grief, anger, mental torture, and pain. The same grief, distress, and misfortune that has befallen you has befallen me. But I resort to the patience and consolation which Allah ﷻ has ordered the God-Fearing to have.¹

This letter is brimming with love, concern, and true sympathy; and in another narration it is reported that he wept until his crying could be heard.²

Even if we were to accept that the narrations of the alleged disagreement were true and that they did differ with each other, then too in no way does it necessitate that either one of them be permanently disparaged. In fact, each of them possesses abundant virtue and familial bonds with the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. As a result, it would be befitting to turn a blind eye to whatever shortcomings they might have possessed, and that too only if this alleged incident were true, which in this case it is not.

Concerning the book *Baṣṣā‘ir al-Darajāt* of al-Ṣaffār, Hibat Allāh al-Sharistānī says in *Mujallah al-Mushid al-Baghdādiyah al-Sanat al-Rābi‘ah* (pg. 328):

غير أنني لا أعتد على هذا الكتاب بصائر الدرجات إذ هو مشترك بين رجلين وفيه روايات عن الغلاة والضعفاء .

1 *Bihār al-Anwār*, 47/299.

2 *Bihār al-Anwār*, 47/302.

Besides I do not consider this book, *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, to be reliable. As the name of the author is shared by two different individuals, and it contains reports from extremists and weak narrators.

Āṣif al-Musinī says about it in *Mashra'at Biḥār al-Anwār* (1/442):

وعمدة مصدرها بصائر الدرجات الصغار الثقة التي لم تصل نسختها إلى المجلسي بسند معتبر ولا دليل على سلامتها من التغيير والتبديل

The best of its sources is *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* of al-Ṣaffār—the reliable—the manuscript of which did not reach al-Majlisī with a reliable chain, nor is there any proof that it has been preserved from alteration or change.

In the first allegation, the narrator Sulaymān ibn Hārūn has been severely criticized. Al-Ḥillī says about him in *Khulāṣat al-Aqwāl*:

قال ابن الغضائري سليمان بن هارون النخعي أبو داود يقال له: كذاب النخع، روى عن أبي عبد الله ضعيف جدا

Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī says, “Sulaymān ibn Hārūn al-Nakhā'ī Abū Dāwūd: It has been said about him, ‘The Liar of Nakha.’ His narrations from Abū Abd Allāh are extremely weak.”

In the second allegation, ‘Alī ibn Sa‘īd or Ibn Sa‘d has not been deemed reliable. Refer to *Mu‘jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth* of al-Khūṭī (# 8163).

As for the statement of ‘Abd Allā ibn Ḥasan that anyone of the Quraysh is worthy of being Imām, this is supported by the Ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ:

الأئمة من قريش

Rulers/leaders (Imāms) are from the Quraysh.¹

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*, # 19792. Shu‘ayb al-Arna‘ūṭ classified it as Ṣaḥīḥ; *Musnad Abī Ya‘lā*, # 3633; *Sunan Nasā’ī al-Kubrā*, # 5942; *Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays*, pg. 134; *Sharah Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, 12/483; *Al-Ihtijāj*, 1/211.

As well as:

الناس تبع لقریش في هذا الشأن

The Quraysh has precedence over the people in this connection (i.e. the right of ruling).¹

As well as a number of other narrations which explicitly state that the right of Khilāfah belongs to the Quraysh. So why then should this Imām be disparaged for following the clear authentic narrations of the Prophet ﷺ? If the Khilāfah were further restricted to only a specific branch or group amongst them then the Prophet ﷺ would have explicitly stated it, and he would not have said Quraysh—which is general in its purport—in place of a specific group, family, or person; which goes against the eloquence of the language and in fact even contrary to the station of Nubuwwah, Allah forbid.

As for the Imāmah of Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه, it is known that his leadership was established when the pledge of allegiance was given to him; ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه was worthy of the Khilāfah—there is no doubt in this—and counted amongst the Khulafā’ Rāshidīn who were upon guidance and the yardstick for all social and political standards.

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه is the great grandfather of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Muthannā, and thus it is extremely farfetched that he would disparage his own grandfather.

The only aspect which ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ denied was the claim that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was divinely appointed by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and instead asserted that he was appointed through the pledge of allegiance being given to him because of his ability to wage jihād, implement the punishments, lead the Ḥajj, and establish the laws of dīn;

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, # 3305, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, # 1820; *Al-Iḥtijāj*, 1/211; *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Itmām al-Ni‘mah*, 274; *Sharah Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, 12/32.

and if one is unable or unwilling to carry out these duties then what benefit is there in appointing such an Imām. Keeping this mind, one would not find any problem with the statements of ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ, but in fact what he said represents the absolute truth.

As for the alleged jurisprudential differences; al-Kulaynī has reported in *al-Kāfī* from al-Kalbī, the genealogist:

دخلت المدينة ولست أعرف شيئاً من هذا الأمر فأتيت المسجد فإذا جماعة من قريش فقلت: أخبروني عن عالم أهل هذا البيت؟ فقالوا: عبد الله بن الحسن، فأتيت منزله فاستأذنت، فخرج إلي رجل ظننت أنه غلام له، فقلت له: استأذن لي على مولاك فدخل ثم خرج فقال لي: ادخل فدخلت فإذا أنا بشيخ معتكف شديد الاجتهاد، فسلمت عليه فقال لي: من أنت؟ فقلت: أنا الكلبي النسابة، فقال: ما حاجتك؟ فقلت: جئت أسألك، فقال: أمرت بابني محمد؟ قلت: بدأت بك، فقال: سل، فقلت: أخبرني عن رجل قال لامرأته: أنت طالق عدد نجوم السماء، فقال: تبني برأس الجوزاء والباقي وزر عليه وعقوبة، فقلت في نفسي: واحدة، فقلت: ما يقول الشيخ في المسح على الخفين؟ فقال: قد مسح قوم صالحون ونحن أهل البيت لا نمسح، فقلت في نفسي: ثنتان، فقلت: ما تقول في أكل الجري أحلال هو أم حرام؟ فقال: حلال إلا أنا أهل البيت نعافه فقلت في نفسي: ثلاث، فقلت: فما تقول في شرب النبيذ؟ فقال: حلال إلا أنا أهل البيت لا نشربه، فممت فخرجت من عنده وأنا أقول: هذه العصاة تكذب على أهل هذا البيت فدخلت المسجد فنظرت إلى جماعة من قريش وغيرهم من الناس فسلمت عليهم ثم قلت لهم: من أعلم أهل هذا البيت؟ فقالوا: عبد الله بن الحسن، فقلت: قد أتيت فلم أجد عنده شيئاً فرفع رجل من القوم رأسه فقال: انت جعفر بن محمد عليهما السلام فهو أعلم أهل هذا البيت، فلامه بعض من كان بالحضرة - فقلت (٢): إن القوم إنما منعهم من إرشادي إليه أول مرة الحسد - فقلت له: ويحك إياه أردت، فمضيت حتى صرت إلى منزله ففرعت الباب، فخرج غلام له فقال: ادخل يا أخا كلب فوالله لقد أدهشني

I entered Madīnah, and I was not aware of anything concerning this matter... [until he said,] so I went to the house of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan and sought permission to enter. A man came out to me, who I assumed was his slave, so I said to him, “Seek permission for me to enter from your master.”

He left and then returned saying, “Enter.”

‘Abd Allāh said, “Did you pass my son, Muḥammad?”

I said, “I began with you.”

He said, "Ask."

I said, "Tell me about a man who says to his wife, 'I divorce you as much as the number of stars in the sky.'"

He replied, "She is divorced with the first three and the remainder is a sin upon him."

I said to myself, "That's one."

I then asked, "What does the Shaykh say about *masaḥ* on *Khuffayn* (leather socks)?"

He replied, "A group of the righteous would make *masaḥ* and we the Ahl al-Bayt do not make *masaḥ*."

I said to myself, "That's two."

I then asked, "What do you say about the consumption of catfish; is it Ḥalāl or Ḥarām?"

He answered, "It is Ḥalāl, but we the Ahl al-Bayt do not eat it."

I said to myself, "That's three."

I then asked him, "What do you say about the consumption of *Nabīdh*?"

He replied, "It is Ḥalāl, but we the Ahl al-Bayt do not drink it."

I then stood and left, saying to myself, "These people lie upon the Ahl al-Bayt."

I then entered the Masjid and saw a group of the Quraysh and other people. I greeted them and then said, "Who is the most knowledgeable of the Ahl al-Bayt?"

1 A drink which is prepared by leaving dates, raisins, etc., water overnight, giving it a sweet taste, and is consumed before fermenting.

They replied, “‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan.”

I responded, “I went to him but did not find him possessing any [knowledge].”

[He later said,] Until I went to the house of Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and knocked on the door. A slave came out to me and said, “Welcome, O brother of Kalb,” and by Allah he left me astounded.¹

Al-Tustūrī added to this, and disappointing indeed is what he added:

وقد رويت عنه أمور منكرة فوق عدم استبصاره ففي خبر انه قال للصديق (عليه السلام) ان الحسين كان ينبغي له إذا عدل ان يجعلها في الأسن من ولد الحسن، وقال ابن قتيبة روى عبد الله بن الحسن يوما مسح على خفيه فقال مسح عمر ومن جعله بينه وبين الله فقد استوثق

Verily vile things have been reported from him, far worse than his lack of discernment², as it is mentioned in a report that he said to al-Ṣādiq عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, “Indeed it was befitting of Ḥusayn when he recanted to place it in the eldest of Ḥasan’s children.” Ibn Qutaybah reported that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan was seen performing masaḥ on his Khuffayn one day after which he said, “‘Umar made masaḥ, and the person who trusts ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ regarding matters between him and Allah, he has indeed found a great trust.”³

Responding to the allegations concerning his jurisprudic rulings

Firstly al-Kalbī is not reliable, in fact he has been suspected for fabrication; in *Tadhīb al-Kamāl* of al-Mizzī⁴ it is mentioned:

1 *Al-Kāfi*, 1/349; *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, 6/315.

2 Al-Tustūrī amazes us with his utter derision of those who disagree with his views, even if they be from the Ahl al-Bayt.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Tadhīb al-Kamāl*, #5763.

Muḥammad ibn Sā'ib al-Kalbī

- » Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd and Ibn Maḥdī suspected him of forgery.
- » Ibn Ma'īn said he is ḍā'if.
- » Sufyān al-Thawrī said, "Strange is the person who narrates from al-Kalbī."

In addition to many other disparaging remarks, how then can he be relied upon when disparaging the likes of this esteemed and venerable Imām.

Secondly, since when does jurisprudic differences in issues such as the consumption of al-Nabīdh, masaḥ on khuffayn, permissibility of catfish, and three talāq result in one becoming disparaged and discarded?

There is no harm whatsoever in him regarding non-intoxicating Nabīdh to be Ḥalāl, as it is indeed farfetched that he would permit the consumption of that which intoxicates as that falls under the same ruling as *Khamar* (wine), which he is far too noble to permit. In addition, the narration clearly states that he does not consume it personally.

If his antagonists insist that it is the intoxicating nabīdh that was implied, then should we say the same about Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq that he too permits the consumption of Nabīdh as is reported in *al-Istibṣār*?

سأل أبا عبد الله (عليه السلام) عن النبيذ فقال حلال فقال إنا ننبذه فنطرح فيه العكر وما سوى ذلك فقال
شه شه تلك الخمر الممتنة

Abū 'Abd Allāh عليه السلام was asked about nabīdh and he replied, "It is Ḥalāl."

The questioner then said, "We make nabīdh by throwing in some pulp [of olives] and other things."

Imām al-Ṣādiq replied, "Vile! Vile! Fermented wine!"¹

1 *Al-Istibṣār*, 1/66.

Imām Ja‘far explained the stance regarding nabīdh in this narration: That which intoxicates is Ḥarām and that which does not intoxicate is Ḥalāl and pure. Will he and his cousin, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan, both be condemned for this?

As for masaḥ on Khuffayn: there are more than 70 narrations from the Prophet ﷺ about this; the narration is thus *mutawātir*¹. Amongst those who mentioned it to be *mutawātir* are:

- » Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr²
- » Ibn Ḥajar³
- » Al-Sakhāwī⁴ and
- » Al-Suyūṭī⁵.

In fact Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal said:

ليس في قلبي من المسح شيء، فيه أربعون حديثاً عن أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ما رفعوا إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، وما وقفوا

I have no misgivings whatsoever regarding masaḥ on Khuffayn; there are 40 ahādīth from the Saḥābah of the Messenger ﷺ, both marfu‘ and mawqūf.⁶

Imām Aḥmad was either referring to those narrations he regarded as Ṣaḥīḥ or those that reached him.

1 *Mutawātir*: A narration reported by such a large number of people that it is impossible to deny.

2 *Al-Tanqīḥ wa al-Īḍāḥ*, 1/272.

3 *Faḥḥ al-Bārī*.

4 *Faḥḥ al-Mughhīth*, 3/40

5 *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, 2/179.

6 *Faḥḥ al-Mughhīth*, 3/40.

Furthermore, is his testimony in favour of Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه such a horrendous crime which necessitates his disparagement? His grandfather, Sayyidunā ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, praised ‘Umar, fought alongside him, executed the Islamic penalties in his presence, and even married his daughter, Umm Kulthūm رضي الله عنها, to ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. In fact, he even named one of his sons after him. Is it a crime now for him to follow the practice of his grandfather ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib?

These amicable relations between ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه were not thumb sucked, but the books of history bear testimony to this in radiant words elucidated by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه himself, which deserves to be written in gold. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, when the latter asked him about leading the Islamic army himself:

إنك متى تسير إلى هذا العدو بنفسك فتلقهم فتتكب، لا تكن للمسلمين كاتفئة دون أقصى بلادهم، ليس
 بعدك مرجع يرجعون إليه، فابعث إليهم رجلاً مجرباً، واحفز معه أهل البلاء والنصيحة، فإن أظهره الله
 فذاك ما تحب، وإن تكن الأخرى، كنت رداءً للناس ومثابةً للمسلمين

If you yourself proceed towards the enemy and clash with them and fall into some trouble, there will be no place of refuge for the Muslims other than their remote cities, nor any place they would return to. Therefore, you should send an experienced man and send with him people well-seasoned and well-intentioned. If Allah grants you victory, then this is what you want. If it is otherwise, you would serve as a support for the people and a place of return for the Muslims.¹

He also said to ‘Umar رضي الله عنه:

فكن قطبا، واستدر الرحي بالعرب، وأصلهم دونك نار الحرب، فإنك إن شخصت من هذه الأرض
 انتقضت عليك العرب من أطرافها وأقطارها، حتى يكون ما تدع وراءك من العورات أهم إليك مما بين
 يديك إن الأعاجم إن ينظروا إليك غدا يقولوا هذا أصل العرب فإذا قطعتموه استرحتم، فيكون ذلك أشد
 لكلبهم عليك وطمعهم فيك.

1 *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon: 132.

Be the pivot and rotate the ‘mill’ (of government) with (the assistance of) the Arabs, and be their foundation. Avoid (direct) battle; for the Persians, if they see you tomorrow they will say, “This is the chief of Arabs. If we do away with him (today) we will be in peace.” In doing so, this will provoke them and they will be even more eager to attack you.¹

He also praised ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after his demise:

لله بلاء فلان فقد قوم الأود وداوى العمد. خلف الفتنة وأقام السنة. ذهب نقي الثوب، قليل العيب. أصاب خيرها وسبق شرها أدى إلى الله طاعته واتفاه بحقه. رحل وتركهم في طرق متشعبة لا يهتدي فيها الضال ولا يستيقن المهتدي

To Allah belongs the credit for the efforts of so and so. He straightened the crookedness, cured the maladies, established the Sunnah, and left the *Fitnah* (trial) behind. He departed from this world with a clean garment and with very few faults. He partook of the good of this world and avoided its evil. He fulfilled the right of the obedience of Allah and feared as he was required to. He passed on and left them (the people) upon many paths, the misguided not finding his way and the guided not certain (about his fate).²

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd³ said in his annotations to this narration in his commentary on *Nahj Balāghah*:

ويروى (لله بلاء فلان)، أي لله ما صنع! وفلان المكنى عنه عمر بن الخطاب، وقد وجدت النسخة التي بخط الرضى أبى الحسن جامع (نهج البلاغة) وتحت (فلان) (عمر) حدثني بذلك فخار بن معد الموسوي الأودي الشاعر

1 *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon: 144, pg. 203.

2 *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon: 144, pg. 222.

3 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd: He is ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Madā’inī, the poet and linguist. He has authored the lengthiest commentary on *Nahj al-Balāghah*. He was born in 586 A.H and died in Baghdad 655 A.H. ‘Abbās al-Qummī wrote a biography for him and praised him in *al-Kuna al-Alqāb*, 1/192.

It is reported as *Lī Allāh Balā' Fulān*, i.e. to Allah are his actions attributed. So-and-so refers to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Verily I found a manuscript in the handwriting of al-Raḍī Abū al-Ḥasan¹, the compiler of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and below the word Fulān was the name 'Umar. This was narrated to me by Fakhār ibn Ma'd al-Musawī al-Awdī, the poet.²

'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ also praised 'Umar saying:

ووليهم وال فأقام واستقام حتى ضرب الدين بجرانه

A ruler governed them who was just and steadfast, until religion reached the point of ultimate satiation.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd said:

الجران مقدم العنق وهذا الوالي هو عمر بن الخطاب

Al-Jirān is the top of the throat. This ruler was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.³

As for the ruling about catfish or eel, 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan deemed it permissible; in accordance with the Book of Allah:

أَحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ

Lawful to you is game from the sea and its food as provision for you.⁴

So what crime is there in permitting what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَعَالِي عَرْشِهِ Himself has permitted?

1 Al-Raḍī Abū al-Ḥasan: He is Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Kāzīm, the scholar and linguist. He was born in 359 A.H and died in 456 A.H. 'Abbās al-Qummī wrote a biography for him and praised him in *al-Kuna al-Alqāb*, 2/272. He also established him to be the author of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and refuted those who deny this.

2 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, 3/12.

3 Ibid, 20/218.

4 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 96.

Even if differences of opinion do exist concerning sea creatures, how can he be condemned for adopting one view over the other, and then derided without any valid proof?

Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī said:

عبد الرزاق عن الثوري عن عبد الكريم الجزري عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس أنه سأل عن الجري فقال : لا بأس به ، إنما هو كرهته اليهود ، وأخرجه ابن أبي شيبه عن وكيع عن الثوري به ، وقال في روايته : سألت ابن عباس عن الجري فقال : لا بأس به ، إنما تحرمه اليهود ونحن نأكله . وهذا على شرط الصحيح . وأخرج عن علي وطائفة نحوه

From ‘Abd al-Razzāq— from al-Thawrī ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jazarī — from ‘Ikrimah — from Ibn ‘Abbās, “There is no problem with it; it was something which the Jews deemed reprehensible.” Ibn Abī Shaybah reported from Wakī — from al-Thawrī with the same chain and in the narration it is mentioned that he asked Ibn ‘Abbās about catfish, to which he replied, “There is no problem with it; verily the Jews deemed it Ḥarām, but we eat it.” This narration is upon the conditions of *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* [*al-Bukhārī*] and has been reported from ‘Alī and others as well.¹

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says in *al-Tamhīd*:

وروي عن علي بن أبي طالب أنه كره الطافي من السمك ، وروي عنه أنه كره أكل الجري من وجه لا يثبت ، وروي عنه أنه لا بأس بأكل ذلك كله ، وهو أصح عنه

It has been reported from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib that he disliked dead fish². It has also been reported from a source that is unestablished that he considered the consumption of catfish to be *makrūh* (disliked). Alternatively it has been reported that he said that there is no problem with consuming any of them; and that is authentic from him.³

1 *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, 9/615.

2 Dead fish found floating in the water.

3 *Al-Tamhīd*, 16/225.

Thus we find ‘Alī and Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما ruling it permissible to consume, which is in harmony with the Qur’ān. What crime has ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ committed if he passed the same verdict as his honorable forefathers from the Ahl al-Bayt?

In fact, al-Ḥillī has said in *Mukhtalaf al-Shī‘ah*:

وقد روى زرارة في الصحيح، عن الباقر - عليه السلام - قال: سألته عن الجريث، فقال: وما الجريث؟ فنعتته له، فقال: (لا أجد فيما أوحى إلي محرماً على طاعم يطعمه إلا أن يكون... إلى آخر الآية) ثم قال: لم يحرم الله شيئاً من الحيوان في القرآن إلا الخنزير بعينه، ويكره كل شيء من البحر وليس له قشر - مثل: الورق - وليس بحرام إنما هو مكروه (٢).

وفي الصحيح عن محمد بن مسلم، عن الصادق - عليه السلام - قال: سألته عن الجري والمارماهي والزمير وما ليس له قشر من السمك حرام هو؟ فقال لي:

يا محمد اقرأ هذه الآية التي في الأنعام: (قل لا أجد فيما أوحى إلي محرماً) قال: فقرأتها حتى فرغت منها، فقال: إنما الحرام ما حرم الله ورسوله في كتابه، ولكنهم قد كانوا يعافون أشياء فنحن نعافها

Zurārah has reported in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from al-Bāqir عليه السلام that he said, “I asked him about eel, and he enquired, ‘And what is eel?’ So I described it to him and he recited, “Say, ‘I do not find within that which was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it unless it be a dead animal or blood spilled out or the flesh of swine—for indeed, it is impure—or it be [that slaughtered in] disobedience, dedicated to other than Allah.”” He then said, “Allah has not prohibited any animals in the Qur’ān besides swine, and everything from the ocean that does not have scales is *makrūh* (disliked),” which are not Ḥarām but Makrūh.

It is reported in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from Muhammad ibn Muslim — from al-Ṣādiq: I asked him about catfish, eel, bagrid catfish, and those fish that do not have scales; are they Ḥarām? He replied, “O Muḥammad, read the verse in Sūrah al-An‘ām (Say, ‘I do not find within that which was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it...). So I recited it until I completed the verse, on which he said, “Verily only that is Ḥarām which Allah and His Rasūl have made Ḥarām in His Book, but they disliked certain things so we too dislike them.”¹

1 *Mukhtalaf al-Shī‘ah*, 8/204-205.

This is a clear testimony from Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq that catfish is disliked; which either refers to the Sharῑ ruling—in other words it is makrūh to consume and not Ḥarām—or disliked according to their personal tastes, which has no effect on the rulings of Sharῑah. Should we ignore the profound knowledge of these two Imāms and now disparage them in the same manner as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan has been disparaged, since they voiced the same opinion as his?

حلال للطير من كل جنس	أحرام على بلايله الدوح
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Is it forbidden for its nightingales to seek shelter in its huge tress, when it is permissible for all other birds of all other types?

As for the issue of Ṭalāq: Allah ﷻ has permitted the issuing of three Ṭalāqs:

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ فِيمَا سَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ

Divorce is twice. Then, either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment.¹

In the next verse Allah ﷻ says:

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ

And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him.²

A number of scholars consider three Ṭalāqs issued at once to be valid as three, which is the view of al-Shafiῑ, Abū Thawr, and has been reported from Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, Ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn Mas‘ūd, and Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. It is also the view of the majority of scholars from the Tabiῑn and those after them.³

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 229.

2 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 230.

3 Al-Mughnī, Chapter of Ṭalāq.

Sa'īd ibn Jubayr and Mujāhid report that Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا was asked about a man who divorced his wife equal to the number of stars and he replied, "He has contradicted the Sunnah and his wife is Ḥarām upon him."¹ Ibn Abī Shaybah reports, "Ra's al-Jawzā"² (three) would have been sufficient for him."³

Then there is no doubt that the additional Ṭalāqs exceeded what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has permitted and as a result will be considered as a transgression on his part.

In fact, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il* of al-Nūrī reports from 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ on the authority of al-Ja'fariyāt:

رفع إلى أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) رجل قال لامرأته: أنت طالق عدد العرفج فقال علي (عليه السلام) ثلاث عرفجات يكفيك من ذلك وفرق بينه وبين امرأته

A case was presented before Amīr al-Mu'minīn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام of a man who said to his wife, "You are divorced equal to the number of Urfuj⁴ plants," and 'Alī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said, "Three Urfuj would have sufficed you." He then separated him from his wife.⁵

It is narrated from al-Ṣādiq, as reported in *al-Istibṣār* of al-Ṭūsī:

عن محمد بن (سعد) الأموي قال: سألت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام عن رجل طلق ثلاثا في مقعد واحد قال:

فقال أما أنا فأراه قد لزمه وأما أبي فكان يرى ذلك واحدة

Muhammad ibn Sa'd al-Umawī said, "I asked Abū 'Abd Allāh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام about a man who gave his wife three Ṭalāq in one sitting and he replied, 'As for me, I see three to be incumbent; whereas my father saw it as one.'⁶

1 *Sunan al-Dāraqutnī*, 4/21.

2 *Ra's al-Jawzā'*: Three stars of Orion's belt.

3 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, # 17813.

4 A type of thorny bush that grows in the desert.

5 *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, 15/304.

6 *Al-Istibṣār*, 3/286; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, pg. 53.

Would ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his grandson al-Ṣādiq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ also be regarded as mistaken in the same manner as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan? What harm can there be in ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Ḥasan adopting a position which the majority of the Ahl al-Bayt and Ṣaḥābah adopted before him?

His critics should acknowledge that there is a difference of opinion concerning these rulings amongst the honourable scholars of Islam, and we do not regard anyone as infallible besides the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ; so there is no issue if this Imam or anyone besides him erred in any of these matters. However, marking a scholar with perpetual disdain on account of some error, this we will never tolerate!

Final Word

After this brief overview of the biographies of these two illustrious Imāms, we are able to discern—and not for the first time but rather emphasizing what we already knew—that a relationship of true empathy and love existed between the Ahl al-Bayt and Ṣaḥābah.

They recognized each other's virtue and the amicable relationship they shared can be discerned from the praises they showered on each other, as well as the marital relations between them.

We also witnessed the manner in which these two illustrious Imāms negated any and all forms of extremism regarding the Ahl al-Bayt, absolving themselves from it entirely.

A rebuttal of the various allegations made against them was also included, which although brief, sufficiently answers the various accusations made against these two illustrious personalities.

We ask Allah ﷻ to guide us and all our Muslim brothers to the Straight Path, and verily only Allah Alone is the giver of that capability.

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