

Chapter 11: At the Time of al-Hadi

Musa al-Hadi received the Islamic caliphate during its tender youth, the bloom of its wet branch, its perfect strength and its abundant wealth. A pledge of allegiance was given to him while he was in the bloom of youth. For he was, just as the narrators say, twenty-five years old.¹ He was reckless and vainglorious. He went too far in committing sins and practicing dissoluteness.

Allah relieved the people from him in the beginning of his government. For his days did not last long. If he had lived for a longer time, the Muslims would have met during his reign the most violent and severest problems. He was tyrannical and arrogant. He did not refrain from shedding blood without justice.

He went too far in shedding the blood of the 'Alawids and subjected them to severe punishment. At last he decided to severely punish Imam Musa, peace be on him, but Allah had broken his back before he carried that out. It is necessary for us to pause to talk about him.

His Tendencies

Musa al-Hadi was distinguished by wicked tendencies that appeared throughout his behavior and his deeds, to the extent that those near and far were displeased with him and all the people hated him. His mother al-Khayzaran harbored malice against him. She was so angry with him and so grudging to him that she killed him.

As for his qualities, they are as follows:

A. His Vainglory and his Recklessness

Al-Hadi undertook the office of the caliphate while he was in the bloom of youth, and that urged him to go too far in showing vainglory and recklessness. Among the aspects of that is that when he walked, the police walked before him carrying swords and spears,² that he might, through that, show the pomp of the king and supreme authority, and show superiority to the people.

B. His Amusement and Dissoluteness

Musa al-Hadi was dissolute; he went frequently to the houses of prostitution and amusement. So he lavishly spent enormous money on his desires and pleasures. For example, he gave fifty thousand dinars to Ibrahim al-Mousili because he sang him a song of three poetry lines, and they delighted him.³ He gave him thirty thousand dirhams for the same reason.⁴ He was too fond of singing that he spent a large amount of the state treasury.

For this reason Ishaq al-Mousili said: "If al-Hadi had lived for a longer time, we would have built the walls of our houses of gold!"⁵ Al-Hadi was interested in drinking wine, so he was the first 'Abbasid caliph to be fond of wine.⁶ Then al-Rashid and the rest of the 'Abbasid kings followed his model!⁷

C. His Ill-temperedness

He was bad-tempered and ill-natured. Al-Jahiz has said: "Al-Hadi was peevish; he was hard in choosing his wishes, overlooked (the people) a little bit and mistrusted (them). He enriched those who guarded against him and came to know of his morals. Nothing was more abominable to him than beginning him with a question."⁸

D. His Showing Enmity toward the 'Alawids

This vainglorious, tyrannical one (al-Hadi) went too far in punishing the 'Alawids severely and in exhausting them. He spread among them fear and terror. He stopped from them the livelihood and the gifts apportioned by al-Mehdi. Then he wrote letters to his governors in all the regions to look for them and to transfer them to Baghdad.⁹

During the short period of this terrorist ruler, the 'Alawids suffered all kinds of persecution and tyranny. For the authorities were excessive in oppressing them, abasing them, and forcing them to do what they had disliked. This made the 'Alawids head for the fields of jihad and declare their great revolt aiming at saving the community from tyranny and oppression. We will talk about that.

The most horrible tragedy the Islamic world faced was that of Fekh, which was similar to that of Karbala" in pain and sorrow. Imam al-Jewad spoke of its strong effects on Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, saying: "After (the Battle of) al-Taff we have no killed greater than those at (the Battle of) Fekh.

At this horrible tragedy the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was violated in respect with his family and his progeny. For at it the 'Abbasids committed (crimes) and offences similar to those committed by the Umayyads during the tragedy of Karbala".

They planted the heads of the 'Alawids atop the spears, showed the prisoners of war all over the countries and the cities, left the pure bodies thrown on the surface of the earth, and did not bury them, that they might extremely quench their thirst for revenge on Ahl al-Bayt. Thus, the tragedy of Fekh was

similar to that of Karbala” in painful stages.

The following is a brief account on some stages of that tragedy, explaining the attitude of Imam Musa, peace be on him, and what happened to him:

Al-Husayn, the great Revolutionist

It was al-Husayn b. ‘Ali who declared the great revolt against the ‘Abbasid government. We have to talk about his lineage, his tendencies and his qualities before we talk about his revolt:

A. His clear Lineage

As for his noble lineage, it is: Al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Abi Talib. His mother is Zaynab, daughter of ‘Abd Allah b. al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Abi Talib. Zaynab and her husband ‘Ali b. al-Husayn were nicknamed the righteous wife and husband due to their much worship.

When Abu Ja‘far al-Mansur killed her father, her brother, her uncles and her cousins; so she wore sackcloth and wore no underwear between it and her body till she joined Allah, the Great and Almighty, (lit. passed away). She mourned for her household with the most tragic mourning, to the extent that the people had fear for her.

Yet she did not say bad words against al-Mansur, for she was pious and hated to quench her thirst for revenge through things that would make her commit sins. She said nothing except: “O Originator of the heavens and the earth! O Knower of the unseen and the seen! O He Who judges between his servants, judge between us and our people with justice; and You are the best of the judges!”

She predicted that her son al-Husayn would raise the standard of the revolt against the ‘Abbasids, so she danced him when young and said to him: O Son of Zayd and Hind¹⁰, do you know how many truthful, glorious uncles and grandfather who belong to Ma‘ad you have?¹¹

B. His Early Life

Al-Husayn grew up in a house covered with pain and sorrows and prevailed by losing children and mourning for the martyrs from among his family whom al-Mansur had executed. He witnessed nothing in his house except crying and impatience. His soul was full of deep sadness and bitter sorrow. So since his earliest life, he got ready to demand vengeance for them and to battle against their opponents.

C. His unique Qualities

Al-Husayn’s personality had all noble qualities such as knowledge, fear of Allah, piety, righteousness, and renouncing the world. He was among the generous people of his time. The historians have narrated many examples of his generosity. Abu al-Feraj al-Asfahani narrated on the authority of al-Hasan b.

Hudhayl, who said: "I used to accompany al-Husayn b. 'Ali, the leader of (the Battle of) Fekh.

He went to Baghdad and sold his estate for nine hundred dinars. We went out and stopped at the Market of Asad. Carpets were spread for us at the gate of al-Khan. A man carrying a basket came and said to him: 'Order the boy to take the basket from me.' 'Who are you?' he asked him. 'I make good food,' he replied, 'When a generous man stops at this village, I give it to him as a gift.' He said: 'Boy, take the basket from him. Then come back to us to take your basket.'"

He (al-Hasan b. Hudhayl) said: "Then a man wearing old clothes came towards us and said: 'Give me of what Allah has given to you.' Al-Husayn said to me: 'Give him the basket.' And he said to the man: 'Take that which in the basket and return the basket to us.' Then he turned (to me) and said: 'When he returns the basket, give him fifty dinars.

When the owner of the basket comes, give him a hundred dinars.' So I (al-Hasan b. Hudhayl) said to him: 'May I be your ransom, you sold your state to repay the debts against you, but one asked you and you gave him satisfying to him, and you were not satisfied with that until you ordered fifty dinars to be given to him. Then a man brought you some food, that he might get one or two dinars, while you ordered a hundred dinars to be given to him.'"

So he (al-Husayn b. 'Ali) said: "O Hasan, we have the Lord Who knows the good deeds. When the beggar comes, give him a hundred dinars; and when the owner of the basket comes, give him two hundred dinars. By Him in whose hand is my soul, surely I fear that He does not accept (that) from me. That is because gold, silver, and earth are the same to me." [12](#)

Surely they were generous souls having qualities from their grandfather, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who came to make the people happy and to raise unhappiness from them.

Al-Hasan b. Hudhayl has narrated, saying: "I sold a wall belonged to al-Husayn b. 'Ali for forty thousand dinars, but he scattered them at his door, and none of his family took any of them. He gave me a relief, and I sent it to the poor in Medina." [13](#)

Surely he was among the origins of favor and kindness. He thought that money was worthless except that through which he satisfied the hungry and clothed the naked; he was similar to his forefathers who showed kindness and good toward all the people. The tradition narrated from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in respect with him:

It has been narrated on the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, that he passed through Fekh and led his companions in the prayer for the dead, and then he said: "A man from among my household along with a group of believers will be killed here. Shrouds and scent for embalming will be sent down to them from the Garden; and their souls will precede their bodies to the Garden." [14](#)

Muhammad b. Ishaq reported on the authority of Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali, peace be on him, who

said: “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, passed through Fekh; he dismounted and performed one ruk’a. When he performed the second, he cried while he was praying.

When the people saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, cry, they cried. When he went away, he asked them: ‘What made you cry?’ They replied: ‘When we saw you cry, we cried, O Allah’s Apostle.’ He said: ‘When I had finished performing the first ruk’a, Jibril came down to me and said: ‘O Muhammad, one of your grandsons will be killed in this place; the one who will be martyred with him takes reward of two martyrs.’”¹⁵

A tradition narrated from Imam al-Sadiq concerning him:

Al-Nadr narrated, saying: “I rent out (my camel) to Ja’far b. Muhammad from Medina to Mecca. When we passed through Batn Murr, he said to me: ‘Nadr, when we arrive at Fekh, tell me.’ I asked him: ‘Do you not recognize it?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘but I fear that my eye may overcome me.’”

Nadr added: “When we arrived in Fekh, I approached the double camel-litter, and found him sleeping. I cleared my throat, but he did not rise. Then I shook the double camel-litter, and he woke up. I said to him: ‘You have reached (Fekh).’ He said to me: ‘Take my place.’ And I took it. Then he said: ‘Go on walking.’ I went on it.

Then I took him away from the road and made his camel kneel down, and he said: ‘Give me the container and the coffee pot.’ He performed the ritual ablution and prayed. Then he mounted (his camel), and I asked him: ‘May I be your ransom, I saw you doing something; is it among the rites of the hajj?’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘but a man from among my household along with a group (of believers will be killed here). Their souls will precede their bodies to the Garden.’”¹⁶

[The Reasons for his Revolt](#)

The historians have unanimously agreed on that the reason for the revolt of al-Husayn, the great, is the enormous pressure and intense tyranny from which he suffered. Musa al-Hadi appointed ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, a grandson of ‘Umar bin al-Khattab’s, as a governor over Yethrib (Medina).¹⁷ ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz was rude, boorish, and ill-tempered. He was known for showing enmity toward Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

The sinful one (‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz) went too far in abasing and wronging the ‘Alawids. He forced them to stand before him every day and imposed upon them personal observation. He made them bail each other to stand before him. His policemen arrested al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah b. al-Hasa, Muslim b. Jundub, and ‘Umar b. Selam. They claimed that they had found them drinking wine.

So ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ordered them to be flogged. Accordingly, al-Hasan was flogged eighty times; Muslim b. Jundub was flogged fifteen times; and ‘Umar b. Selam was flogged seven times. He ordered their necks to be tied to ropes and them to be displayed through the streets of Yethrib (Medina), that he

might expose them.

For this reason the Hashimite (lady), who carried the black standard during the days of Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah, sent him (a letter in which) she said to him: "No, and there is no dignity (for you). Do not expose any Hashimite, and do not revile them, while you are an oppressor. Refrain from that and release them!"

Al-'Umari ('Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz) appointed a man called Abu Bakr b. 'Isa al-Ha'ik (the weaver) as a ruler over the Talibiyyin, and he showed them on Friday. He did not allow them to go to their houses until it was time for prayer. They frequently asked him to perform the religious duty, and he allowed them after several attempts. After they had performed the religious duty, he imprisoned them in the fortified, wide house until the afternoon. He did that to them for nothing except that he wanted to seek nearness to al-'Umary.

Then he showed them and sent for al-Husayn b. Muhammad, but he did not come, so he said to Yehya and al-Husayn b. 'Ali: "You should bring him to me, otherwise I will imprison you, for he has been absent from the show for three days.

They gently answered him, but it was useless to this rouge, so Yehya was forced to return in like. He angrily went out to al-'Umary and told him of the story, and he ordered them to be brought before him. When they stood before him, he threatened them. However, al-Husayn laughed at his silly words and said to him with mockery: "Are you angry, Abu Hafs?"

Al-Husayn called al-'Umary by his kunya, and not by an official title, and he became angry and displeased with him, saying: "Why do you sneer at me and call me by my kunya?"

Al-Husayn opposed him and aimed at him an arrow of his eloquent words, saying: "Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who were better than you, were called by their kunyas, and they did not refuse that, while you hate the kunya and want (us) to call you by an official title!" Al-'Umary became excited and did not control himself, saying:

"The end of your words is worse than its beginning." "I seek refuge with Allah; Allah refuses that for me; it does not belong to me," retorted al-Husayn.

"Did I make you come in to me to vie with me in glory and to harm me?" al-'Umary asked.

Yehya became angry due to his flagrant aggression against al-Husayn, saying to him: "What do you want from us?" "I want you to bring me al-Hasan b. Muhammad," al-'Umary replied.

"We are unable to bring him," Yehya retorted, "he is like any other person. Send for the household of 'Umar b. al-Khattab; gather them just as you have gathered us; then show them one by one, and you will find some of them have absent from you for a period longer than that of al-Husayn. In this case you must have treated us with justice."

Al-'Umary lost his mind and swore by divorcing his wife and releasing his slaves that he would not release al-Husayn unless he brought him during the rest of his daytime and his night. If he did that, it would be good and well, otherwise he would go to Suwayqa [18](#) to destroy it and burn it and flog him a thousand times. If he had found al-Husayn, he would have shed his blood.

Yehya answered him while he could not see his way out of displeasure. He decided to revolt and battle against that government, saying: "I will give a promise to Allah, and all my slaves will be released. I will not taste sleep tonight until I bring you al-Hasan b. Muhammad. If I do not find him, I will knock at your door that you may come to know that I have come to you."

They left him and went out. They were angry with him, for his rudeness hurt them. Al-Husayn turned to Yehya and criticized him for the promise he gave to al-'Umary in order to bring al-Hasan, saying: "By Allah, bad is what you did when you swore (by Allah) to bring him! Where will you find al-Hasan?"

Yehya told him that he practiced precautionary dissimulation, and that he meant to carry out something else. "By Allah, if bring him al-Hasan, then I will turn away from Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and from 'Ali, peace be on him. I want to sleep that I will be able to knock at his door while I have the sword with me. If I have power over him, I will kill him."

Al-Husayn met al-Hasan and said to him: "O Cousin, you have heard of what was between me and this sinful (al-'Umary); therefore, go wherever you wish."

"No, cousin," replied al-Hasan, "by Allah, I will come with you now, that I may put my hand in his hand. I do not want Allah to see me when I will meet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, while he will be my opponent and argumentative out of (shedding) your blood." Honor and nobility have appeared in these words that issued from a soul that did not come to know of treason and betrayal, nor was it defiled by the love of life.

The 'Alawids and their believing, righteous followers held a meeting and discussed al-'Umar's bad treatment toward them. So they decided to attack him in his house. When they attacked him, he escaped in a cowardly manner. Then Yehya said: "This is al-Hasan. I have brought him; therefore, bring al-'Umary; otherwise, by Allah, it will go out of my right hand."

This attitude is the reason for the revolt of al-Husayn, for the foolish authorities forced him to resist them. That is because he thought that he had to yield to abasement and humility refused by the 'Alawids who drew the refusal and glory in the world of Arabs and Islam or he had to die for dignity that was the slogan of the 'Alawids, who said:

"When people hate the heat of fight, they become low." As a result al-Husayn chose the way of resistance and struggle, so he and the choice from among his household decided to die free and noble under the shadow of the spearheads.

His Martyrdom

Al-Husayn hoisted the standard of the revolt and declared holy jihad, so al-Talibiyyin joined him; none was absent from them except few persons. He took them and headed for Imam Musa to consult him.

After he had sat down, he presented his viewpoint before the Imam, and he, peace be on him, turned to him, saying: "You will be killed; therefore, sharpen the sword, for the people are sinners; they show faith and harbor hypocrisy and polytheism.

To Allah we belong and to Him is our return! I sacrifice you, O Group of people, in anticipation of Allah's reward!"

Imam Musa, peace be on him, thought that the revolt would fail and the 'Alawids would be the victims to the treacherous aggression. However, al-Husayn had no escape from the revolt, for he suffered oppression and abasement. He went away from the Imam, gathered the people and led them in prayer. After he had finished performing the prayer, he rose and delivered a sermon among the people. He praised and lauded Allah, and then he said:

I am the son of Allah's Apostle and in the Sacred City of Allah's Apostle. I summon you to the practices (Sunna) of Allah's Apostle, [19](#) may Allah bless him and his family. Do you seek the traditions of Allah's Apostle on prevention and benefits, while you have lost his grandsons![20](#)

When he had finished his wonderful speech, the people walked toward him to pledge allegiance to him according the Book of Allah, and the Sunna of His Apostle, and the summons to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family.[21](#)

It was said that he said to those who pledged allegiance to him: "I pledge allegiance to you according to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of Allah's Apostle, that Allah should be obeyed and not disobeyed. I summon you to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, and that we should behave toward you according to the Book of Allah, the Sunna of his prophet, justice among the subjects, equal division, and that you should side with us and struggle against our enemy.

So when we are loyal to you, then you must be loyal to us. If we are not loyal to you, then we have no pledge of allegiance against you."[22](#)

This speech is a proof of what he sought through his reformative revolt. He intended to spread social justice, to raise the standard of living, to put into practice the Qur'anic laws, and to establish the Islamic justice.

After the people had pledged allegiance to him, he appointed Dinar al-Khaza'i as a governor over Yethrib (Medina), and then he headed for Mecca accompanied by his household and his companions, who were about three hundred people. He stopped at Fekh and pitched his tents there. The 'Abbasid troops headed by al-'Abbas b. Muhammad and Musa b. 'Isa followed them.

The two parties met during the morning prayers on the Day of al-Tarwiya (Dhu al-Hijja 8th). The troops of oppression and error (the 'Abbasid troops) attacked those some believers who have no objective except saving the community from that ruling group who spread corruption in the land. After a terrible conflict between the troops of the truth and those of oppression, al-Husayn was killed with a treacherous arrow shot at him by Hammad al-Turki, the sinful rogue!

Most al-Husayn's companions were martyred; their heads were cut off [23](#) and sent to the 'Abbasid Caliph. The 'Abbasid troops, who did not come to know of honor and humanity, buried their sinful companions, and left al-Husayn and his companions, who were slaughtered immolation, without washing and shrouds.

They sent the heads to Musa b. 'Isa, in whose gathering was a group of the 'Alawids headed by Imam Musa, peace be on him. When the Imam saw the heads, he felt pain and sadness, so he, peace be on him, praised al-Husayn, saying: We belong to Allah and to him is our return! By Allah, al-Husayn has died! He was a righteous Muslim! He used to fast, to pray, to enjoin the good, and to forbid the evil; none of his household was like him."[24](#)

The murder of al-Husayn was among those great events at that time. For it made a big gap in Islam, and for through it the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was violated, while it is the most appropriate of the sacred things to be respected. The Shi'ite poets wept bitter tears for his murders and mourned over him with moving mourning. Among those who elegized he is 'Isa b. 'Abd Allah, saying:

I will weep over al-Husayn and al-Hasan [25](#) with lamentation.

And so do I for Bin 'Atiq[26](#) whom they buried without a shroud.

In the early morning they left him in Fekh, which is not his homeland.

They (the 'Alawids) died noble; they were neither reckless nor cowardly.

They washed abasement off themselves just as dirt is washed off clothes.

People have been guided by their grandfather; therefore, they have showed kindness to men.[27](#)

Another poet has elegized al-Husayn with a poem in which he has said:

O my eye, weep with tears pouring down, for I have seen what the children of al-Hasan meet!

They were thrown down at Fekh; the wind and the rain clouds that come at the last hour of night and in the early morning draw their tails on them.

To the extent that their bones have been effaced. If Muhammad saw them, he would defend them and be not feeble.

What will they and those before them say concerning the enmity, the hatred, and the grudge?

What will they say when the Prophet asks them: What did you do to us in the bygone time?

Neither the people from among Mudar, nor Rabi'a, nor the districts from the Yemen protected (them) and became angry (with their enemies).

Woe unto them! Why did they not respect their sacredness, while the Elephant respect the Corner of the Kaaba? [28](#)

Certainly, the murder of al-Husayn, the martyr, was among the heavy events in Islam, for it has left bitter pain in the souls of Muslims who still remember it with too much sorrow and sadness.

The Prisoners of War reaches al-Hadi

The heads of the pure, pious 'Alawids reached al-Hadi, the tyrannical. Along with them were the prisoners of war. They were shackled with ropes and chains; their hands and legs were put into iron, to the extent that abasement and humility prevailed them.

Al-Hadi, the sinful and tyrannical, ordered them to be killed. They were unjustly killed and crucified on the gate of the prison. [29](#) Among them was an invalid man who begged al-Hadi, saying: "I am your follower, O Commander of the faithful?"

However, al-Hadi shouted at him, saying: "Does my follower go out in revolt against me?"

Musa b. 'Isa had a knife, and he said to him: "By Allah, I will cut you into pieces with this knife."

The invalid man lived for an hour. The illness overcame him, and he died a natural death. [30](#)

The 'Alawids' heads were put before al-Hadi, the tyrannical, and he recited these poetry lines:

Our cousins, do not compose poetry after you have been buried in the desert with very hot borders!

We are not like him whose attainment you had got, and he accepted oppression or appointed someone as a judge! However, the decision of the sword among you is empowered! So we are pleased when the sword is pleased! If you say that we have oppressed you, we have not oppressed you, but we have misjudged! [31](#) This poetry is evidence for al-Hadi's vainglory and recklessness, and for his vengeful soul, which did not come to know of mercy and pity.

His threatening Imam Musa

When Musa al-Hadi uprooted the 'Alawids, he threatened those living from among them with murder and destruction. He mentioned their head and master, Imam Musa, peace be on him, saying: "By Allah,

al-Husayn did not go out in revolt except through his order, nor did he follow anything except love for him. For he (Imam Musa) is the one who gives orders to his household.

May Allah kill me if I keep his life!” He added: “Were it not for that which I heard from al-Mehdi who narrated from al-Mansur concerning that Ja’far (i.e. Ja’far al-Sadiq), peace be on him, had merits exceeding those of his household in his religion, his knowledge, and his virtue, and (were it not for) that which reached me from al-Saffah concerning praising him and preferring him to others, I would dig up his grave and burn him completely with fire!”

Abu Yousif, the judge, was in his gathering; he opposed him, saying: “I would divorce my wives, release the slaves whom I own, give all my properties as alms, and imprison my back animals if Musa b. Ja’far went out in revolt. Neither he nor his sons believe in that. We should not think that that will issue from them.”

Abu Yousif went on calming down al-Hadi, and he became calm.³² This noble attitude is a proof of his nobility and honor.

Imam Musa pays no attention to al-Hadi’s Threats

Al-Hadi threatened Imam Musa, peace be on him. So his household and his companions hurried to him. They had fear for him, so they unanimously agreed on that he had to hide himself, that he might be safe from the wickedness of al-Hadi, the tyrannical. However, the Imam smiled at them, for he came to know through the unseen that al-Hadi, the oppressive, would perish.

He, peace be on him, recited the poetry line of Ka’ab b. Malik ³³

Sukhayna claims that she will overcome her Lord; the Victor will overcome the fighter! And he recited another poetry line:

Al-Farazdaq claims that he will kill Mirbi’; be delighted at a long safety, O Mirbi’! This is evidence for that Imam Musa, peace be on him, paid no attention to al-Hadi’s threats, for he had come to know that Allah would beak his back before he harmed him.

His Supplication against him

Imam Musa, peace be on him, faced the Qibla (direction to prayer). He pleaded to Allah and implored Him in order to save him from the wickedness of al-Hadi, the tyrannical. He invoked Allah against him through this great supplication:

My God, how many an enemy has unsheathed the sword of his enmity toward me, honed the cutting edge of his knife for me, sharpened the tip of his blade to me, mixed his killing poisons for me, pointed toward me his straight-flying arrows, not allowed the eye of his watchfulness to sleep toward me, and

secretly thought of visiting me with something hateful and making me gulp down the bitter water of his bile!

So you looked, my God, at my weakness in bearing oppressive burdens, my inability to gain victory over him who aims to war against me, and my being alone before the great numbers of him who is hostile toward me and lies in way for me with an affliction about which I have not thought. You set out at once to help me and You barbed up my back! You blunted for me his blade, made him, after a great multitude, solitary, raised up my heel over him, and turned back upon him what he had pointed straight.

So you sent him back, his rage not calmed, his burning thirst not quenched! Biting his fingers, he turned his back in flight, his columns having been of no use. So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many an oppressor has oppressed me with his tricks, set up for me the net of his snares, appointed over me the inspection of his regard, and lay in ambush of a predator for its game, waiting to take advantage of its prey, which he showed me the smile of the flatterer and looked at me with the intensity of fury!

So when You saw the depravity of his secret thoughts and the ugliness of what he harbored, You threw him on his head into his own pitfall and dumped him into the hole of his own digging. So he was brought down low, after his overbearing, by the nooses of his own snare, wherein he had thought he would see me; and what came down upon his courtyard—had it not been for Your mercy—was on the point of coming down upon me!

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many an envier has choked upon me in his agony, fumed over me in his rage, cut me with the edge of his tongue, showed malice toward me by accusing me of his own faults, made my good repute the target of his shots, collared me with his own constant defects, showed malice toward me with his trickery, and aimed at me with his tricks!

So I called upon You, my Lord, seeking aid from You, trusting in the speed of Your response, relying on Your good defense which I still know, knowing that he who seeks haven in the shadow of Your wing will not be mistreated, and he who seeks asylum in the stronghold of Your victory will not be frightened.

So You fortified me against his severity through Your power. So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and

among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a cloud of detested things You have dispelled from me, a cloud of favor You have made rain down upon me, a stream of dignity You have let flow, an eye of mishap You have blinded, a growing mercy You have spread, a well-being in which You have clothed me, a wrap of distress You have removed, a going on affair You have decreed, which does not render You feeble when I ask You for it, and is not impossible to You when You will it.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a good opinion You have verified, a destitution You have redressed, a heavy misery You have transformed, an infirmity You have restored to health, and a hardship You have removed. You cannot be questioned concerning what You do and they shall be questioned. What You give does not decrease You.

You are asked and You bestow. You are not asked, and You begin. Your favor is requested, and You do not skimp. You refuse, my Master, everything but beneficence, kindness, graciousness, and favor; and I refuse everything but plunging into what You have made unlawful, showing audaciousness to the acts of disobedience to You, transgressing Your bounds, paying no heed to Your threat, obeying my and Your enemy.

My God, my Helper, my breaking gratitude does not hinder You from completing Your beneficence, nor am I stopped from committing acts displeasing to You!

O God, so this is the station of a lowly servant who confesses to Your Oneness, acknowledges against himself in falling short of performing Your right, bears witness to Your ample favor upon him, Your beautiful manners toward him, and Your beneficence to him. So give me, my God, my Master by Your favor which I want as means to Your mercy and may take as a ladder with which to climb to Your good pleasure and be secure from Your displeasure, through Your might and power, and by the right of Muhammad, Your Prophet, and the Imams, the blessings of Allah be upon him and them all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning in the anguish of death, rattle in the throat, looking at that with which skins shiver and of which hearts are afraid, while I am secure from that all. So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning sick, feeling pain, seriously ill, moans, wails, rolls in grief, finds no escape, does not swallow food easily, does not find drink sweet, can do neither harm nor benefit, in regret and remorse, while I have a sound body and safety life; all that is from You.

So bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning afraid, frightened, sleepless, broken-hearted, lonely, ignorant, fugitive, runaway or confined in a narrow place or a hiding place, feeling the earth narrow though it is wide, finding no means nor refuge nor shelter nor a place of flight, while I am in security, safety, tranquility, and secure from that all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, my Master, how many a servant enter into evenings and upon mornings handcuffed, shackled in iron, in the hand of the enemies who have no mercy upon, deprived of his homeland, his children, and his family, cut off from his brothers, every hour expecting in which killing he will be killed, and in which maiming he will be maimed, while I am secure from that all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning suffers war, undertakes fighting, surrounded from all sides by enemies, swords, spears, war tools, moving in iron in the range of his effort, knowing no means, coming upon no way, finding no place of flight, weakened by inflicting wounds, stained with blood, under the toes of the hoofs and feet, desirous for a drink of water, unable to see his family and his children, while I am secure from that all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning in the shadows of sea, violent winds, terrors, waves, expecting drowning and ruin, unable to find a means or afflicted with a thunderbolt or a burn or choking or sinking down or disfigurement or defamation, while I am secure from that all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who

thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning a traveler, far away from his family, his homeland, his children, perplexed in the deserts, wandering among wild animals, beasts, and vermin's, lonely, singular, knowing no means, finding no way, suffering from cold, heat, hunger, nakedness or other hardships of which I am void; I am secure from that all.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning poor, dependent, naked, reduced to poverty, failing, abandoned, hungry, afraid, thirsty, waiting someone to do him a favor; or a notable servant, who is more notable than me with You or greater in worshiping You, (but he is) fettered, overcome, carrying the burden of tiring toil, severe enslavement, troublesome slavery, and a heavy tax or afflicted with an intense tribulation which he cannot endure except through Your showing kindness to him, while I am served, live in comfort, enjoy well-being, honored, and secure from that in which he is.

So Your is praise, O My Lord, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons!

My God, my Master, my Protector, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning homeless, runaway, perplexed, hungry, afraid, bareheaded in the deserts and lands, burnt by heat and cold, in a harmful, hard life, and a lowly station, looking at himself with regret, can do neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Possessor of the merciful!

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning sick, ill, invalid, seriously ill, on the bed of illness and in its garment, turning left and right, knowing nothing of the pleasure of food and drink, looking at himself with regret, can do to it neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who worship You, among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Possessor of the merciful!

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning close to his death, encompassed by the Angel of death and his helpers, suffering the agony of death, turning his eyes left and right, looking not at his beloved ones and his friends, prevented from speech, veiled from addressing (them), looking at himself with regret, can do to it neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who worship You, among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Possessor of the merciful!

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning in narrow prisons, in their distress, their abasement, and their iron; their guards undertake him one by one; he does not know what they will do to him and what kind of maiming they will maim him, so he is in a harmful, hard life, looking at himself with regret, can do to it neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who worship You, among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful.

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon mornings the decree continues against him, the tribulation encompasses him; he leaves his beloved ones and his friends; he becomes lowly, captive, humble in the hands of the unbelievers and the enemies taking him to the left and to the right. He is confined in the underground (prisons) and made heavy with iron, seeing nothing of the light and happiness of the world, looking at himself with regret, can do to it neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who worship You, among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Possessor of the merciful!

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning yearning for the world and desirous for it, to the extent that he endangers his life and his properties out of craving after it. He embarks the ships, and they break down while he is in the horizons and the shadows of the seas, looking at himself with regret, can do to it neither harm nor benefit, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who worship You, among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful, O Possessor of the merciful!

My Protector, my Master, how many a servant enters into evening and upon morning the decree continues against him, surrounded by tribulation, the unbelievers, and the enemies, taken by the spears, the swords, and the arrows; he is thrown down, and the earth absorbs his blood; beasts and birds of prey eat his flesh, while I am secure from that all, through Your munificence and generosity, not through a merit of mine.

So there is no god but You; glory belongs to You, the All-powerful who is not overcome, and the Possessor of patient waiting who does not hurry, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Possessor of the merciful!

I swear by Your might, O Generous, I will seek of that which is with You, insist on You, resort to You, stretch out my hand toward You though it is sinful in Your sight. So with whom, my Lord, shall I seek protection? And with whom shall I take refuge? I have none except You. Shall You turn me away while I rely and depend on You?

I ask You—through Your name which You put on the heaven, and it became independent, on the mountains, and they became firm, on the earth, and it became stationary, on the night, and it became dark, on the day, and it became luminous—to grant my needs, to forgive me all my sins, small and great, and to give me generously that You may make me reach the honor in this world and the next, O Most Merciful of the merciful!

My Protector, I seek Your help, so bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, and help me. I see protection with You, am in no need of obeying Your servants through obeying You, of begging Your creatures through begging You. Move me from the abasement of poverty to the glory of riches, for the abasement of acts of disobedience to the glory of the acts of obedience, for You have preferred me for many of Your creation in munificence and generosity, not out of a merit of mine!

My God! So praise belongs to You for that all! Bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, place me among those who thank You for Your favors, and among those who remember Your boons! Have mercy upon me through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful![34](#)

After the Imam, peace be on him, had finished his holy supplication, he turned to his companions to calm them down and to give them some of his knowledge which he took from his grandfather, the Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: “Your fear will be relieved. The first letter to come from Iraq is on the death of Musa al-Hadi.”

They asked him to disclose to them the veil, saying: “And what is that, may Allah set you right?”

“By the sacredness of the owner of this grave—he indicated with his hand to the tomb of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family” he replied, “Musa al-Hadi has died on this day of his. By Allah, it is true just as you say.” The people scattered and impatiently looked for the coming of the postman from Iraq. The postman quickly came and gave them good news of the death of Musa al-Hadi, the tyrannical.

One of Ahl al-Bayt composed a poem on this miracle, which happened at the hand of the Imam, saying:

Many a night supplication which does not walk on earth seeking a place and which no messenger carries due to the remote distance.

It walks where it does not bound the stirrup, does not stay at a place, and no hindrance shortens the remoteness for it.

It passes from behind the night which is long in mid, during which there are sleeping and sleepless.

The gates of the heaven and those below them are open when a knocker knocks on them.

When it comes, Allah does not turn its coming away from its men; and Allah is Seeing and Hearing.

I hope for Allah as if that I, through good opinion, could see what he would do.[35](#)

The Death of Musa al-Hadi

Allah responded to the supplication of his friend, the righteous servant, (Imam Musa). He destroyed his tyrannical, arrogant enemy, saved the people and the country from his wickedness and tyranny. As for the reason for his death is that some sources say that he had an ulcer in his stomach, and he died of it.[36](#)

Most resources have mentioned that his mother al-Khayzaran was angry with him, for he stopped her influence for a famous story, and that she had fear of him for her son Harun, who was the most lovable to her of the world and what was in it.[37](#) So she ordered some of her slave girls to strangle him, and they strangled him while sleeping.[38](#)

Any way the page of al-Hadi, the tyrannical, was turned over, and his days did not last long. His caliphate was a year and some months, but it was tiring and heavy on the Muslims who faced during it the most violent and difficult problems. That was when they saw the heads of the grandsons of the Prophet were planted atop spears and displayed all over the countries and the cities.

They also saw their captives killed and crucified, so the sacredness of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and that of Islam was not respected, while Islam made it incumbent on Muslims to love them.

The thing that increased the Muslims in ordeal and tiredness is that Musa al-Hadi devoted himself to amusement, futility, and dissoluteness. He spent the money in the central treasury on his pleasures and gave a lot of money to the singers. He paid no attention to Islam, which made it obligatory on rulers to be very careful of the Muslims' properties and made it forbidden to them to spend money on things other than their interests and their economic development.

Imam Musa, peace be on him, witnessed all those immense events and faced most of its tragedies, which increased him in tiredness and effort. He came to know that the truth was lost, justice was deserted, and Islamic life was absent. That is because the then ruling authorities broke all the Islamic teachings on the world of policy, economy, and administration.

- [1.](#) Khulasat al-Dhahab al-Masbuk, p. 75.
- [2.](#) Hadart al-Islam fi Dar al-Salam, p. 84.
- [3.](#) Al-'Asr al-'Abbasi, p. 128.
- [4.](#) Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani, vol. 5, p. 241.
- [5.](#) Ibid., p. 6.
- [6.](#) Al-Jahshyari, p. 144.
- [7.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 6, p. 489. Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani, vol. 5, p. 216.
- [8.](#) Al-Tajj fi Akhlaq al-Muluk, p. 35.
- [9.](#) Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 136.
- [10.](#) Hind was Zaynab's mother. She was the daughter of Abu 'Ubayda b. 'Abd Allah b. Samm'a b. al-Aswad b. al-Muttalib b. Asad b. 'Abd al-'Izza b. Qasir. Before 'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan married her, she had been the wife of 'Abd al-Malik b. Merwan. When 'Abd al-Malik died, she took her inheritance and returned home. 'Abd Allah said to his mother: "Propose to Hind." She blamed him for that and said to him: "Do you crave after her while you are poor and having no money?" So 'Abd Allah left his mother and went to Hind's father. He proposed to his daughter, and he welcomed him and responded to him. He said to him: "She is your wife." Then he came in to his daughter and said to her: "My daughter, 'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan has proposed to you." She asked him: "What have you said to him?" "I have married you to him," he replied. She agreed with him on that. 'Abd Allah married Hind, but his mother had no knowledge of that. He remained there for seven days, and then he returned to his mother. He was perfumed and dressed in new clothes, so his mother asked him: "My son, from where have you brought this?" "From her whom you had claimed that she did not like me," he answered. Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani, vol. 18, p. 209.
- [11.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, pp. 431-432.
- [12.](#) Ibid., pp. 436-441.
- [13.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin.
- [14.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin.
- [15.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin.
- [16.](#) Ibid. p. 437.
- [17.](#) Al-Kamil, vol. 5, p. 74. It has been mentioned in Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 243: "Musa al-Hadi appointed over Medina Ishaq b. 'Isa, and he appointed over it a man from among the children of 'Umar b. al-Khattab called 'Abd al-'Aziz b. 'Abd Allah."
- [18.](#) Suwayqa was a house belonged to the children of al-Hasan. It was near Medina and was among the endowments of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. Mu'jam al-Buldan, vol. 5, p. 18.
- [19.](#) In his history, al-Tabari has mentioned that al-Hasan has said: "I summon you to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of his Prophet. If I was not loyal to you in respect with that, then you had not to pledge allegiance to me."
- [20.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 484.

- [21.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 10, p. 25.
- [22.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 490.
- [23.](#) In his history, vol. 10, p. 28, al-Tabari has mentioned that the number of the heads cut off was a hundred and some
- [24.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 453.
- [25.](#) Al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan, the Prophet's grandson, peace be on him. Was captured at the battle and his head was unjustly cut off.
- [26.](#) Ibn 'Atika is 'Abd Allah b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan al-Muthenna, as it has been mentioned in the book al-Istisqa', vol. 1, p. 67.
- [27.](#) Al-Mas'udi, Murujj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, pp. 248-249.
- [28.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 460.
- [29.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 10, p. 29.
- [30.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, p. 453.
- [31.](#) Mu'jam al-Buldan, vol. 6, p. 308.
- [32.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 278.
- [33.](#) Ka'b b. Malik al-Kazraji was the poet of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and was among the seventy persons who pledged allegiance to him at al-'Aqaba. He took part in all the battles except the Battle of Badr. He became blind. He died during the Caliphate of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. Mu'jam al-Shu'ra', p. 342.
- [34.](#) This Supplication is better known as the Supplication of al-Jawshan al-Sagheer. It has been mentioned by al-Sayyid Ibn Tawus in his book Muhajj al-D'art, pp. 220-427. It has also been mentioned by Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi in his book Mafatiheeh al-Jinan. It has also been mentioned by Ibn Shahrashub in his book al-Menaqib.
- [35.](#) Al-Manaqib, vol. 2, p. 378.
- [36.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 10, p. 33.
- [37.](#) Ibid., p. 36.
- [38.](#) Al-Jahshyari, p. 175. Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 138.

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