

Lesson 19: The Second Imam And The Fourth Infallible Figure, Imam Hasan

It was on Ramadhan 15, 03 that Imam Hasan (‘a) was born from such a great mother as, Fatimah (‘a). He was the first child who beamed in the house of leadership. As the great Prophet was informed of his birth, he went to the house of ‘Ali and Fatimah and took his daughter’s baby and embraced him and then recited *Adhan* in his right ear and *Iqamah* in his left ear and subsequently, at the command of God, called him Hasan.

One of his most famous epithets is *Mujtaba*. Imam Hasan was raised by such exemplary parents as ‘Ali and Fatimah and the marks of greatness and magnanimity were evident in him from early on. The great Prophet liked him so much and regarding him has observed, “O God! You know that I like Hasan and also like anyone that likes him.”

He has also observed, “Hasan is my blossom” and also that, “Hasan and Husayn are the leaders of Muslims whether they rise up or not.” That is, even if for the sake of Islam they decide to remain silent and refuse to protest against others’ rule.

As children, once he and his brother Husayn saw an old man performing the ablutions incorrectly. They wanted to correct the old man but since he was aged, they did not want to do so offensively.

They staged an interesting scene. They went up to him and told him, “O old man! We both perform ablutions, you observe and judge who does so better!” The old man looked as they performed ablutions and realized that his own ablutions have been wrong and these great children have done that to teach him. Then he told them, “O the darlings of the Prophet! You perform ablutions correctly but my ablutions were not correct and I learned from you how to do it accurately.”^{[1](#)}

Imam Hasan was seven when the Prophet passed away and then he spent thirty years with the Commander of the Faithful and attained the position of leadership at the age of thirty seven. He was poisoned to martyrdom at the age of forty seven and was buried at Baqi’ cemetery in Medina.

Some Remarks by Imam al-Hasan

Anyone who frequents a mosque will derive one of the following benefits (the mosques should have such features).

1. He will learn the primary principles of the faith and other Islamic teachings.
2. He will hear remarks that will lead him to the straight path and keep him from deviation.
3. Out of the dread of God or shyness or embarrassment, he will avoid wrongdoing.
4. He will come across a helpful brother (a faithful and close friend).
5. He will be blessed by God.[2](#)

Imam Hasan's Peace Agreement

Following the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, the shi'ah people of Iraq and the four thousand troops of 'Ali ('a) who had gathered at *Nukhaylah*, pledged allegiance to Imam Hasan ('a). Having concluded the allegiance ceremony, Imam Hasan delivered a critical and moving speech before a large crowd at the mosque of Kufah. During this speech, he warned people against depravity, and obedience to Satan and his followers.

Then he expressed his readiness to fight Mu'awiyah and called on the commanders of his army to get their soldiers ready for the attack on Sham and he was involved in making preparations in Kufah himself.

Mu'awiyah learned about these events and realized that Imam Hasan has decided to carry on with his father's plans. Therefore, he started sabotage and since he was adept at deception, hypocrisy, and intrigue, he managed to draw a number of Imam Hasan's companions to himself through different means and thus he drove a wedge in Imam's army. As a result of duplicity, bribery, and riches, he went so far as some of the opponents of Imam Hasan and the hypocrites and mercenaries, who were abounding in his army, wrote a letter to Mu'awiyah and promised to deliver Imam a captive, if Mu'awiyah came to Iraq.

Despite this, Imam Hasan never retracted his statements and in one of his speeches said, "Mu'awiyah along with a group of people from Sham are coming toward Kufah, you must get ready to confront them." After that he executed a spy that was sent by Mu'awiyah to Kufah and wrote to ibn 'Abbas, the governor of Basrah, to execute Mu'awiyah's spy in that city too.

Initially, people did not respond positively and at last through the encouragement and perseverance of one of his companions, they promised to assist but when Imam Hasan went to Nukhaylah, he learned that the majority of those who had pledged to help, had shrunk from their commitment and had deserted him.

Furthermore, some of his commanders joined the army of Mu'awiyah after receiving large sums of bribes at the border with Sham and abandoned Imam Hasan. In short, Imam's army was dispersed and his companions were anxious and agitated. In the meantime, a number of his enemies exploited the opportunity to attack Imam himself and plundered his tent and severely wounded his leg. This was a summary of Imam Hasan's conditions then. At this time, Mu'awiyah raised the peace agreement.

Imam Hasan ('a) thought that if he did not make peace with Mu'awiyah, both he and his companions would be slain and then Mu'awiyah would declare that they did not accept his proposal for peace and had themselves killed. Thus, he would be slain and it would not bring about any advantage for Islam and Muslims. Appreciation of the duty is more important than its fulfillment. Occasionally, we are compelled to keep quiet for a long time as sages have observed, "Sometimes withdrawal is the most effective assault."

In other words, at times peace is the most honorable combat. If Imam Hasan had been swayed by the emotions of his companions, he and his companions would have been slain in vain, and he would not have derived any result from his martyrdom. Therefore, under those circumstances, Imam concluded that it is in the best interests of Islam and Muslims to accept peace, but within the framework of this peace, all the interests of Muslims should be guarded and Mu'awiyah's true nature must be exposed.

In fact, one of the wrong inclinations of some people is that, they tend to engage in warfare all the time, while on the other hand, the tendency to be constantly at peace with the enemies is also wrong. A realistic person should take into account the interests and take steps accordingly.

Sometimes, expediency compels us to wage a war and at times it dictates peace. In Islamic laws, there are rules pertinent to warfare and there are ones about peace. If the Prophet fought with the infidels in the conflicts of Badr and Ahzab, the same Prophet established peace with the same folks and signed the well-known Hudaibiyyah peace treaty.

Thus, at the command of God, the Exalted, Imam Hasan ('a) made peace with Mu'awiyah in a peace agreement that contained some articles. Upon closer examination of this treaty, it grows clear how far Imam took the interests of the Islamic community into account.

And the fact that Mu'awiyah did not abide by the peace agreement revealed his true nature and people more or less realized that he is not an Islamic leader but an ambitious, despotic, and secular tyrant.

The Text of the Peace Agreement

1. Mu'awiyah must conduct himself in accordance with the divine book and the tradition of the great Prophet.
2. He must refrain from reviling and maligning 'Ali ('a) and command his subordinates to abstain from abusing that Imam in their speeches.

3. He must not introduce anyone as his successor or deputy.
4. Imam Hasan ('a) should be absolved of having to call Mu'awiyah, the Commander of the Faithful.
5. He should put an end to the persecution of 'Ali's household and companions and let them live peacefully like other people.
6. He must allocate part of the revenues to Imam Hasan so that he could distribute that among the families who had lost their breadwinners in the conflicts of Jamal and Siffin and also to be able to repay the debts that he had to incur for the sake of people. [3](#)

[1.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 43, p. 319.

[2.](#) Tohaf al-'Uqul, p. 235. this narration has been quoted from the Commander of the Faithful and Imam al-Husayn (peace be upon them) in Wasa'il al-Shi'ah.

[3.](#) Abridged from Hayat al-Hasan.

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