

A Series of Ideological Researches

# **Infallible Imams (a)**

**A Short Study on the Lives of the Infallible Imams (a)**

**Volume Five**

**Imam al-Jawād, Imam al-Hādī and Imam  
Ḥasan al-‘Askarī**  
(peace be upon him)

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Islamic Truths Center

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**In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**



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## Foreword

The last and the most perfect divine religion was conveyed to humanity by Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him and his family. The prophethood came to an end with him. The religion of Islam emerged in Mecca but it spread all over the Arabian Peninsula after twenty-three years of strenuous efforts made by the Messenger of Allah (s) and a handful of his loyal companions.

The continuation of this divine mission was an important undertaking that was delegated publicly on Dhūl Hijja, the 18<sup>th</sup>, by Allah, to ‘Alī (peace be upon him), the Commander of the Faithful and the first and the noblest personality after the Holy Prophet (s) in the Islamic world.

With proclamation of Haḍrat ‘Alī’s guardianship and succession on this day, divine blessings were completed and the religion of Islam was perfected and announced as the only religion chosen by Allah. That was when and how unbelievers and pagans despaired of destroying and harming Islam.

Soon after the demise of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s) premeditatedly deviated from the course of guidance and leadership. They closed the gate of the city of knowledge putting Muslims in perplexity and confusion. From the very beginning of their rule, they placed the truths of Islam – that were like a shining sun – behind the dark clouds of doubt and skepticism by way of putting a ban on

recording prophetic traditions, spreading fabricated ones, casting doubts and embarking on hypocritical and deceptive tactics.

Obviously, in spite of all conspiracies hatched by the enemies of Islam, the truths of Islam and noble sayings of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, continued to spread as they were carried on and communicated by the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, peace be upon him, his successors and a few of his devout companions and those truths kept flowing and manifesting themselves in one way or the other in the course of history. By explaining the truths, they did away with doubts, specious arguments, and false beliefs presented and inculcated by the enemies of Islam, and made the truth clear to all.

In this respect, great scholars and men of knowledge such as al-Shaykh al-Mufīd, al-Sayyid Murtaḍa, Khwāja Naṣīr, al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, Qāḍī Nūrullah, Mīr Ḥāmid Ḥussain, al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn, al-‘Allāma al-Amīnī etc. having been glittering like shining stars, since they are the ones who defended Islamic truths, explained the realities of the school of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, and dealt with spurious arguments using their tongues and pens.

In our era, one of the outstanding scholars and researchers who has, with his eloquent pen and expressive writing, explained the truths of the religion of Islam and defended the *imamate* and *wilāyah* (guardianship) of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī (peace be upon him) is the great researcher Ayatollah al-Sayyid ‘Alī al al-Ḥusaynī al-Mīlānī, may he live long.

The Islamic Truths Center is proud to take up the task of reviving the fruitful and precious works of this great researcher by reviewing, translating and publishing them in a bid to make them available to students, scientific figures and those who are in search of Islamic truths.



The book in your hand is a translation of one of his works entitled *Infallible Imams (peace be upon him)* and which hopefully will acquaint English readers with Islamic truths. It is expected that this humble effort will earn the pleasure of the Baqiyatullah, the Imam of Age, Imam Mahdī, may Allah hasten his reappearance.

Islamic Truths Center



# **First Part**

**Imam al-Jawād**  
(peace be upon him)

## **A Brief Look at the Life of Imam Muhammad Taqī al-Jawād (peace be upon him)**

‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, writes:

Imam al-Riḍa's son, Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) was also like his father in terms of wisdom, piety and generosity. When his noble father was martyred, Ma'mūn was fascinated by the knowledge, religiosity and wisdom of Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him. That was why he decided to marry out his daughter, Umm al-Faḍl, to him. Obviously, he had also married another daughter of his, Umm Ḥabīb, to Imam al-Riḍa, peace be upon him.

This action on the part of the caliph worried many Abbasids who later embarked on more stringent measures fearing that the Abbasid family might lose grip of power if Ma'mūn began to follow Imam al-Jawād just as he followed his father, peace be upon him.

Those close to Ma'mūn gathered together in Ma'mūn's court to ask him not to marry his daughter to Imam al-Jawād telling him that he was young and lacked knowledge and wisdom.

"I know him better," Ma'mūn said to them "You can test him if you wish so."

They accepted to test Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him. So they gave Yaḥyā b. Aktham a handsome amount of money telling him to ask him a question which he would find difficult to answer.

They then fixed a day for this purpose. A host of top Abbasid official accompanying Judge Yaḥyā b. Aktham took their seats in a meeting to which Ma'mūn had already invited Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him.

Facing Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, Judge Yaḥyā b. Aktham, said, "I have a question to ask you."

"Go ahead," said the Imam in the typical tone of his ancestors.

Yaḥyā, then, asked the Holy Imam, "What is your verdict about a man who indulges in hunting while he is in the state of Ihram'. (In the code of religious law hunting is forbidden for a pilgrim who has donned a special garment named Ihram).

The Imam at once replied, "Your question is vague and misleading. You should have definitely mentioned whether he hunted within the precincts of the Ka'ba or outside; whether he was literate or illiterate; whether he was a slave or a free citizen; whether he was a minor or an adult; whether it was for the first time or he had done it previously; also, whether that prey was a bird or some other creature; whether the prey was small or big; whether he hunted in the day or at night; whether the hunter repented for his action or persisted in it; whether he hunted secretly or openly; whether the 'Ihram' was for Umra (the lesser pilgrimage) or for Hajj (the greater pilgrimage). Unless all these points are explained no clear-cut answer can be given to this question."

Judge Yaḥyā b. Aktham was bewildered and staggered in listening to these words, of the Holy Imam, and the entire gathering was dumbfounded. Inability and indecision were clear on Yaḥyā b. Aktham's face.

There and then Ma'mūn said, "Did you get what you denied?"

He then turned to Imam al-Jawād, and asked, "Do you seek my daughter's hand in marriage to you?"

"Yes," Imam al-Jawād replied.

Ma'mūn then asked Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him., to solemnize the marriage contract and Imam recited the formula after he agreed to a dowry of 500 dirham which is was the dowry of his mother, Lady Fatima Zahra, peace be upon her.

### **Symbol of Knowledge and Piety**

‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, said:

Imam al-Riḍa's son, Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) was also like his father in terms of wisdom, piety and generosity.

Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, a famous Sunni jurist, memorizer of Hadith, sermonizer and historiographer, writes in the second chapter concerning the Imam (peace be upon him):

"He acted in the same way as his father in terms of knowledge, piety, generosity and kindness."<sup>1</sup>

Describing Imam al-Jawād's character, al-Ṣafḍī also writes:

"He was one of the elders and nobles of the family of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. Ma'mūn married his daughter to him. When Imam Jawād (peace be upon him) went to Mu'taṣim, the latter paid homage and treated the Imam with respect. He was known for his generosity, which is why he was nicknamed "Jawād". He is one of the twelve Imams."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣ al-'umma*, 358; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī's biography found in *Waḥyāt al-a'yān*, vol.2, p.142; *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, Appendix of *Al-Mukhtaṣar*, al-'Ibar Ḥawādith, vol.5, p.220; *Ṭabaqāt al-mufaṣṣirīn*, vol.2, p.382 and other books.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Wāfi bil-waḥyāt*, vol.4, p.100.

Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī also deals with the attributes of Imam al-Jawād. Thus, he writes:

"He was nicknamed Jawād, Qāni' (contented), and Murtaḍa. He is one of the nobles and honorable members of the family of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his family.<sup>1</sup> He was known for his generosity, which was why he was nicknamed Jawād."<sup>2</sup>

### **Interpreter of Revelation**

Imam Jawād (peace be upon him) transmits traditions on the authority of his noble father and grandfathers from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and family. People turned to him seeking his assistance in understanding the meanings of the traditions as well as the Islamic laws. Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and other Sunni scholars have recorded some of these facts in their works.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Shaykhānī al-Qādirī says:

One of the caliphs suffered from an illness and he vowed that if God healed his illness, he would give away a lot of money in charity. However, he did not fix the amount of charity and left it ambiguous and unspecified. When he recovered from the illness, he summoned the jurists of the town to ask them how much "a lot of money" was in their opinion. Everyone said something. Imam Jawād, peace be upon him, said:

ان كنت نويت الدنانير فتصدق بثمانين ديناراً، أو الدراهم، فتصدق بثمانين درهماً.

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<sup>1</sup> Sunnis send out greetings to the holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, in an imperfect way. This is the case with all of their major sources. We follow his advice in using greetings after the names of all of the Infallible Imams, peace be upon them.

<sup>2</sup> *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol.15, p.385; *Ḥawādith*, p.220.

<sup>3</sup> *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3, p. 54; *Al-Wāfi bil-Wafiyāt*, vol.4, p. 106; *al-A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar*, p. 103.

"If you had intended to fulfill your vow by paying dinar in charity, you should give away eighty dinars, and if you had intended to fulfill your vow by paying dirham in charity, you should give away eighty dirham."

The jurists present in the caliph's court said that they had not seen any verses in the Quran or any tradition from the Prophet (s) to confirm him.

Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) then answered:

بلى قال الله تعالى: (لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۗ) والنصر من أقسام العافية، فعدوا وقائع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم فإذا هي ثمانون"

"That is not the case, Allah Almighty says: "Certainly, Allah helped you in many battlefields" and victory is one of the types of well-being, so count the battles of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, and they are eighty."<sup>2</sup>

In addition, there are instances which quite clearly point to Imam al-Jawād's merit and great personality in terms of piety, generosity and magnanimity, but the Ahl al-Sunna do not narrate them in their books so that the Infallible leaders, upon whom be peace, and their status are not known to their audience.

They, however, state at the same time that "there are many stories and reports about Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him."<sup>3</sup>

Many other Sunni authors have not even dedicated a chapter to Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, in their history books.

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<sup>1</sup> Sūra al-Tawba, verse 25.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Şirāt al-Sawī fī Manāqib Āl Bayt al-Nabī – Manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Wafiyāt al-A'yān, vol. 3, p. 315.



## **Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) and Ma'mūn**

‘Allām al-Ḥill, may Allah's mercy be upon him, said:

"When Imam al-Jawād's father, peace be upon him, was martyred, Ma'mūn was enchanted and quite taken aback by the Imam's knowledge, wisdom and religion in his very early childhood.

### **Who is Yaḥyā b. Aktham?**

We shall explain the following saying of ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī (ra):

Yaḥyā b. Aktham al-Marwazī was the chief judge. He was known as Imam (leader) in Fiqh and Hadith. It has been recorded in his biography found in some sources that he was a drinker, sodomizer and perpetrator of many sins.

Yaḥyā b. Mu'īn writing about Yaḥyā b. Aktham's transmission of traditions says:

"He was a liar."

Ibn Rahawiyya also describes him as Dajjāl.

Ibn Junayd says about Yaḥyā: "He used to steal hadith."

Abū Ḥatam says: Yaḥyā's character is objectionable. It is said that he was in charge of fundraising and collecting charity for the blind but he never gave anything of the donations to them.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that Yaḥyā had been their chief judge and these are some facts about him and his actions!

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<sup>1</sup> See: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol.9, p.129; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, p.5; *Mīzān al-i'tidāl*, vol. 4, p. 361 and other books.

## **Imam al-Jawād (peace be upon him) and Yaḥyā b. Aktham's Questions**

The story narrated here by ‘Allāma al-Hillī, may Allah bless him, is one of the definitive historical events which Ahl al-Sunnah have not reported as usual. However, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī has made mention of it but he attributes to the Imamiyya School and says:

The Imamiyya Shiites narrate a lengthy story in which it is reported that when Ma’ mūn chose Muḥammad al-Jawād as his daughter's husband, he was no more than seven years and a few months old, and he solemnized the marriage contract.

The ‘Abbāsids conspired against Ma’ mūn in order not to fulfill his wish. They promised to give Yaḥyā b. Aktham, the Judge, a handsome amount of money, if he chose hard questions to test Imam al-Jawād.

However, Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, responded to all the questions raised by him. This lengthy narration has been transmitted by al-Shaykh al-Mufid in his *Kitāb al-Irshād*, and God knows best.<sup>1</sup>

## **Ibn Taymiyya's Illusory View**

Ibn Taymiyya writes in this regard:

The narrations that this Rafiḍīs mentioned is just like similar stories that he has been mentioning about Imams. Surely, Shia Rafiḍa do not have clear (uncontaminated) intellect, nor do they have sound texts, they neither establish a truth nor do they destroy a falsehood; neither with cogent proof and exposition nor with hands and weapons. Nothing of what he mentioned establish the virtues of Muḥammad b. ‘Ali al-Jawād, let alone proving his Imamah? The story that he mentioned about Judge Yaḥyā b. Aktham is nothing but

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ*, p. 359.

fabricated lies, which makes nobody happy but the ignorant. Yaḥyā Bin Akthum is a learned, virtuous jurist that cannot be confused by a person asking questions about a pilgrim who has killed an animal for even scholars of lesser status knew the rule concerning this type of issue; it is neither a complex issue nor a strange one, it is also not a specialized issue that only a knowledgeable, higher level scholar can answer.

On the other hand, what is mentioned in this story only seeks to sort out different situations which a hunter may encounter but there is no mention of the rules applicable to those situations.

It is to be noted that when an issued is divided into multiple smaller components, it alone does not imply knowledge of the rules applicable to all the sub-issues.

### **Answer to the Illusory View**

We would say in response to Ibn Taymiyya:

There are many facts that this man denied openly before, and we proved them by God's grace. But this story very clearly implies that Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, was more learned and knowledgeable than their Chief Judge. This fact is denied by none other than stubborn people. When the unrestricted knowledge of Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, is proved, the absolute Imamate is also proved to be reserved for him.

Moreover, ‘Allāma al-Hillī, may Allah bless him, has narrated this story in brief. Had Ibn Taymiyya referred to al-Shaykh al-Mufīd’s *Kitāb al-Irshād* or other books, he would have found that Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, explained the rules of the divisions at Ma’ mūn’s request.

Also, it has been said that Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, asked Yaḥyā b. Aktham about the rule regarding a

particular issue confessing that he himself did not know it. There and then he asked the Imam to let him know the rule.

To avoid prolonging the discussion, we request our dear readers to read this story in full in the book authored by al-Shaykh al-Mufid, may God have mercy on him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Irshād fī maʿrifat ḥujaj Allah ʿalā al-ʿibād*, vol. 2, p. 281-288.

## **Part Tow**

**Imam al-Hādī**  
(peace be upon him)

## **A Brief Look at the Life of Imam al-Hādī (peace be upon him)**

‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, writes:

Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, is the son of Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him. He is also called al-‘Askarī because Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliph, summoned him from Medina to Baghdad and from there to Sāmarrā’. Then he was taken to a place called ‘Askar where he lived for sometime but he was soon transferred to Sāmarrā’ where he settled for twenty years and nine months.

One of the reasons why he was made to settle in Sāmarrā’ was that al-Mutawakkil felt hatred and spite towards Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, inasmuch as he had come to know about his status and popularity in Medina and the people’s inclination towards him, which caused him to worry.

Al-Mutawakkil summoned Yaḥyā b. Harthama instructing him to transfer Imam al-Hādī from Medina to another place.

The people of Medina loved Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, so much, for he kept to the mosque of the Prophet (S) feeding their ulama’ with his knowledge, giving charities to their poor, and he did not have any tendency towards the worldly life.

Yaḥyā b. Harthama, began calming down people’s worry and fear, and swore to them that he had not been ordered to do the Imam any wrong. They believed him and calmed

down. He then searched the Imam's house only to find copies of the Holy Qur'an, books of du'a and scientific books. That was why, the Imam looked great to him, and he himself took upon himself to serve him thereafter. When Yaḥyā entered Baghdad, he went to straight to Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Ṭāhirī, the governor of Baghdad.

The Baghdad governor said to him, 'O Yaḥyā, this man is the son of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, and you know that al-Mutawakkil is deviant. If you inform al-Mutawakkil of a word against the Imam, he will kill him, and then the Prophet (S) will be your opponent on the Day of Resurrection.'

Yaḥyā answered, 'I swear by Allah that I have not seen anything except good from him.'

Yaḥyā says, 'When I met with Mutawakkil, I admired the Imam's good conduct, asceticism and piety. Mutawakkil also treated him with much respect.

Once, al-Mutawakkil became ill and he vowed that if Allah healed him, he would pay many dinars as charity. When he recovered, he gathered the jurisprudents and asked them about the amount of the money he had to pay as charity to fulfill his vow, but they disagreed on that.

Then, he asked Imam al-Hādī (a.s.) about that. Imam al-Hādī (a.s.) said that al-Mutawakkil had to pay eighty-three dinars. The jurisprudents were astonished at that and asked al-Mutawakkil, 'Where from did he get this answer?' Al-Mutawakkil wrote to Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, asking him about the source of his answer, and Imam al-Hādī (peace be upon him) replied, 'Allah the Almighty says,

***Allah has given you victory in many battlefields.***<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quran (9): 25

All our ancestors narrated that the battlefields were eighty-three, because the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, took part in twenty-seven battles and sent men to battlefields to fight on fifty-six other occasions.<sup>1</sup> The total battles he fought were eighty-three.

Mas‘ūdī says: al-Mutawakkil was told that ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, peace be upon him, was hiding weapons in his house. These weapons, stored in his house, were provided by his followers from the people of Qom. They had warned that he was conspiring to take power.

Al-Mutawakkil sent a number of Turks to his house. They tried to break into the house of Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, in the night and fetch all weapons and monies they might find there, but they did not find anything there. They found Imam al-Hādī in a closed room wearing a wool-garment and a wool cap, and saw him sitting on sand facing the Qibla, praying and reciting the Quran.

The agents took Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, to al-Mutawakkil while he was drunk at the table of wine. When he saw Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, he treated him with respect and asked him to sit beside him. He offered him a glass of wine, but Imam al-Hādī shouted at him:

مَا خَامِر لِحْمِي وَدِمِّي قَطُّ فَاعْفِنِي مِنْهُ

‘By Allah, it has never mixed with my blood and flesh at all, so pardon me (for not accepting your offer).’

Al-Mutawakkil accepted the Imam’s apology and said, “I want to benefit from you voice.”

Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, started reciting these

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<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that the battles in which the Prophet (s) took part were called “Ghazwa” and the battles in which he was absent were called “Sariya”.



verses:

كَمْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ وَزُرُوعٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ وَنَعْمَةً كَانُوا فِيهَا فَآكِهِينَ.

How many gardens and springs did they leave behind! Fields and splendid places, and the affluence wherein they rejoiced!

Then, al-Mutawakkil asked the Imam, ‘Recite me some poetry!’

Imam al-Hādī (peace be upon him) said, ‘I seldom recite poetry.’

Al-Mutawakkil insisted on him saying, ‘You must recite me some poetry!’

Imam al-Hādī (a.s.) found himself obliged to recite some poetry, and so he recited the following poems that changed the ecstasy of al-Mutawakkil into sorrow and weeping:

بَاتُوا عَلَى قُلُلِ الْأَجْبَالِ تَحْرُسُهُمْ	غُلِبَ الرَّجَالِ فَلَمْ تَنْفَعَهُمُ الْقُلُلُ
وَاسْتَنْزَلُوا بَعْدَ عَزٍّ مِنْ مَعَاقِلِهِمْ	فَأَسْكُنُوا حُفْرًا يَا بَسَسَ مَا نَزَلُوا
نَادَاهُمْ صَارِخٌ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا دُفِنُوا	أَيْنَ الْأَسِيرَةُ وَالْتَّيْحَانُ وَالْحُلُلُ
أَيْنَ الْوُجُوهُ الَّتِي كَانَتْ مُحَجَّبَةً	مِنْ دُونِهَا تُضْرِبُ الْأَسْتَاذَ وَالْكَكَلُ
فَأَفْصَحَ الْقَبْرُ عَنْهُمْ حِينَ سَاءَ لَهُمْ	تِلْكَ الْوُجُوهُ عَلَيْهَا الدُّودُ تَنْتَقِلُ
قَدْ طَالَ مَا أَكَلُوا دَهْرًا وَ مَا شَرَبُوا	فَأَصْبَحُوا بَعْدَ طُولِ الْأَكْلِ قَدْ أَكَلُوا

*“They were on the tops of mountains,*

*Guarded by strong, brave men, but those tops sufficed them not.*

*After glory, they were taken down from their positions, and put into holes. How bad abode they dwelt in!*

*A crier called them after been buried:*

*Where are the thrones, crowns, and treasures?*

*Where are the faces that were at ease and luxury,  
that curtains and screens were put before them?*

*The grave showed those faces where worms were fighting on  
them.*

*How long they ate and drank!*

*But after that long eating, they were eaten!”*

Al-Mutawakkil was shaken and intoxication flew from his head. He began terribly crying to the extent that tears soaked his beard.

### **Why was Imam al-Hādī called al-‘Askarī?**

‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, said:

“Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, is the son of Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him. He is also called al-‘Askarī because Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliph, summoned him from Medina to Baghdad and from there, he was taken to Sāmarrā’ ...”

Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says in this regard:

“Al-Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliph, brought Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, from Medina to Baghdad. He then took him to Samarrā’ where he settled for twenty years and nine months.”<sup>1</sup>

Sibt b. al-Jawzī also writes:

“The fact that Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, was given the epithet al-‘Askarī is because al-Mutawakkil took him from Medina to Baghdad wherefrom he was transferred to Samarrā’. He lived there for twenty years and nine months. He was also known with the epithets such as al-Naqī and al-

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<sup>1</sup> *Tārīkh Baghdad* (History of Baghdad), vol. 12, p. 56.

Mutawakkil.”<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Khallakān says: “When more and more people gossiped and reported him to al-Mutawakkil, he summoned him from Medina – his birthplace – and kept him in Sāmarrā’. Sāmarrā’ is called al-‘Askarī because when al-Mu‘taṣim, another Abbasid caliph, built this city, he took his army there which is why it is called ‘Askar. Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, is called al-‘Askarī for the same reason inasmuch as he is ascribed to that place where he lived for twenty years and nine months.”<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī says:

“He was given the epithet “al-‘Askarī” because he was moved from Medina to Sāmarrā’ where he was provided with a house to live in. Sāmarrā’ was named ‘Askar. For the same reason, he became known as al-‘Askarī.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Al-Mutawakkil’s Hatred towards the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon him)**

‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, said:

**“Al-Mutawakkil felt hatred and spite towards Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him...”**

Al-Mutawakkil’s hatred and ill will towards the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, peace be upon him, is well-known, and no one entertains any doubt about it. It was he who levelled the grave Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, to the ground and demolished the houses around it. It was he who ordered his agents to plant and cultivate that place, and prevent people from coming to it and visiting the grave of Imam al-

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ*, p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> *Waḥyāt al-a‘yān*, vol. 2, p. 435.

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Ṣawā‘iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 124.

Ḥusayn, peace be upon him.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Bassāmī composed a poetry in which one of his poems reads:

أَسْفُوا عَلَى أَنْ لَا يَكُونُوا شَارَكُوا      فِي قَتْلِهِ فَتَتَّبِعُوهُ رَمِيمَا

The Abbasids were angry as to why they did not participate in the killing of Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him. That was why, they went his broken bones.

Al-Dhahabī says about al-Mutawakkil: “Al-Mutawakkil was Nāṣibī and deviant.”<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Athīr speaking about the events that took place in the year 236 AH, writes: “In this year, al-Mutawakkil ordered his agents to demolish the grave of Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, and the houses around it. He wanted seeds to be sown in the land and water to cover the land. He instructed people to be prevented from going there. That was why, the head of the of the police of that region announced that he would arrest and put to jail anyone who was found there three days after the warning.

Hearing the announcement, the people escaped and stopped visiting the grave of Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him. The lands there were irrigated and used for cultivation.

Al-Mutawakkil harbored a lot of hatred towards ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon them and the Ahl al-Bayt. If he came to know about someone having the love of ‘Alī and the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, he should shed his blood and plunder his property.

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<sup>1</sup> *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 9, p. 185; *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, vol.7, p. 55; *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, p. 315; *Tārīkh al-khulafā’*, p. 347; *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 2, p. 235, and other sources.

<sup>2</sup> *Siyar a ‘lām al-nubalā’*, vol. 12, p. 35.

There was a servant named ‘Ibāda al-mukhannath who worked for al-Mutawakkil in his court. This man tied a pillow to his belly under his garment and untied his turban to show his bald head. He then started dancing in front of al-Mutawakkil with the singers singing:

قد أقبل الأصلع البطين، خليفة المسلمين.

That fat-bellied man, the Caliph of the Muslims, came.

He meant the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, peace be upon him. Al-Mutawakkil kept himself busy drinking and laughing...<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that some Sunni scholars, as reported by al-Dhahabī, describe al-Mutawakkil in the following words:

“Al-Mutawakkil took over the caliphate, and honored the Sunnah. He spoke about Sunnah in his meetings, and made a public announcement that restrictions be lifted, the Sunnah be promoted and those who believed in it be assisted.”<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps, he meant by “Sunnah” the belief in the eternity of the Holy Quran, and the promotion of the Sunnah also meant the same thing, not the Sunnah (tradition) of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī, after narrating a story in this regard, writes: “I understand from this story that al-Mutawakkil had embraced the Shafi‘ī School. He is the first caliph to follow one of the four schools of thought.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to some narrations, one of the epithets of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, peace be upon him, was “al-Anza’ al-baṭīn”. When it comes to the meaning of these words, it has been said that al-Anza’ means ‘free from polytheism’ and al-Baṭīn means ‘full of knowledge’. See: *‘Ilal al-sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 159; *Bihār al-anwār*, vol. 35, p. 53; *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*, vol. 5, p. 42; *Sharḥ ihqāq al-ḥaqq*, vol. 3, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, vol. 7, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Sīyar a’lām al-nubalā’*, vol. 12, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Tārīkh al-khulafā’*, p. 352.

What is more surprising about this book is that after it narrates the famous story regarding Ibn Sikkīt and how al-Mutawakkil treated him, it is said, “al-Mutawakkil was a Rāfiḍī!”<sup>1</sup>

Of course, it is not unlikely that this sentence might not be that of the writer himself or that the publishers of this book might have created this distortion in the book.

Moreover, many other well-known authors have praised Imam al-Hādī’s devotedness to Allah, asceticism in the worldly life, and utmost piety. For example, al-Yāfi‘ī says:

“Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, was devoted and submissive to Allah. He was a jurist and Imam.”<sup>2</sup>

Like him, Ibn ‘Imād al-‘Arabī al-Ḥanbalī has also praised him with the same words.<sup>3</sup>

Ibn Kathīr also describes Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, as such:

“He was devoted and pious.”<sup>4</sup>

Many historiographers have also written that al-Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliph, took Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, from Medina to Iraq. Although they state that al-Mutawakkil was a Nāṣibī,<sup>5</sup> they try to conceal his unjust, cruel and despicable actions or choose not to say anything for fear of its consequences. For this reason, they avoid mentioning

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> *Mir’āt al-jinān*, vol. 2, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> *Shudhurāt al-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya*, vol. 11, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> A Nāṣibī is someone who is hostile, and publicly displays his or her hostility, towards Imam ‘Alī (a) or other persons from Ahl al-Bayt (a). Instances of Nāṣibism is said to include the denial of the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt (a), the cursing of Imams (a), and enmity towards Shi’as. Al-Mutawakkil is one of the Abbasid caliphs who held a bitter grudge and enmity, and was spiteful, towards the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them.

complete details.

In his *History*, al-Ya‘qūbī writes:

“Al-Mutawakkil wrote a letter to ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Riḍā b. Mūsa b. Ja‘far b. Muḥammad, peace be upon them asking him to come from Medina to Iraq.

‘Abd Allah b. Muḥammad b. Dawūd al-Hāshimī had written a letter in which he had said: ‘A group of people say that he is an imam.’

That was why al-Mutawakkil instructed Yaḥyā b. Harthama to bring Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, out of Medina to Baghdad. On their arrival in Baghdad, they decided to stay in a neighborhood called Yāsiriyya. Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm, the governor of Baghdad, mounted his horse and went there to see Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him.

He saw that people eagerly gathered around him to see him. He remained there until night. It was late at night when he came to Baghdad. Thereupon, he was transferred to Baghdad.”<sup>1</sup>

I found this historical report with the same detail recorded by ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, in *Tadhkirat khawāṣṣ al-umma* which is written by a Ḥanafī writer who lived before him (al-Ḥillī). He writes:

“The biographers say, ‘al-Mutawakkil brought him from Medina to Baghdad, because al-Mutawakkil was spiteful towards ‘Alī and his descendants. When he came to know about his high position near the people in Medina, he felt worried. That was why he summoned Yaḥyā b. Harthama instructing him to go to Medina and assess the situation and take him to Baghdad!

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<sup>1</sup> *Tārīkh al-Ya‘qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 484.

Yaḥyā b. Aktham says: I went to Medina and when I arrived there, the people of Medina made so much commotion that no one had such a scene before. That was because they were worried about the safety of Imam al-Ḥādī, peace be upon him, inasmuch as he had done so many acts of kindness to people and engaged in prayer and worship in the mosque and showed no interest in the world.

Yaḥyā says: “I tried to pacify the people, and I pledged to them I had not been instructed to harm and mistreat him, so no problem would occur to him. Then, I searched Imam al-Ḥādī’s house where I found nothing except a few copies of the Holy Quran, supplications and scientific books. That was when he looked great to me. I, therefore, took it upon myself to serve him and treat him with respect.

When we arrived in Baghdad, we first went to Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Ṭāhirī, the governor of Baghdad. He said to me, ‘O Yaḥyā, this man is the grandson of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, and you know al-Mutawakkil pretty well. If you incite al-Mutawakkil, he will kill him, and the Messenger of Allah (s) will be your opponent on the Day of Resurrection.’

I replied to him, ‘I swear by Allah that I have not seen anything except good from him.’

Then we went to Sāmarrā’. There, I first saw al-Waṣīf al-Turkī. I informed him that I was accompanying Imam al-Ḥādī, peace be upon him.

He said: ‘If something bad happens to him, you will be responsible.’

I was surprised to see that al-Waṣīf was also speaking in the same way as the governor of Baghdad.

When I returned to Baghdad, al-Mutawakkil asked me about him. I praised Imam al-Ḥādī’s good character, nobility,



piety, and ascetic behavior. And I said: “I searched his house and found nothing except a few copies of the Holy Quran, supplication and scientific books. The people of Medina were also worried about his safety and well-being.

Then al-Mutawakkil welcomed him and treated him with respect. Then he provided him with a house in Sāmarrā’ to settle.<sup>1</sup>

### **Imam al-Ḥādī (peace be upon him) and al-Mutawakkil’s Question**

Al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, said:

“Once, al-Mutawakkil became ill and he vowed that if Allah healed him, he would pay many dinars as charity. When he recovered, he gathered the jurists and asked them about the amount of the money he had to pay as charity to fulfill his vow, but they disagreed on that. Then, he asked Imam al-Hādī (a.s.) about it...”

Ḥāfiẓ Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says in this regard:

Al-Azharī narrates from Abū Aḥmad ‘Ubayd Allah b. Muḥammad al-Muqrī, he from Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Nadīm, and he from Ḥusayn b. Yaḥyā:

Al-Mutawakkil came down with an illness in the beginning of his caliphate. He said: ‘If I recover from the illness, I will give a lot of dinars in charity.’ When he recovered from the illness, he summoned some jurists and asked them how much he had to pay as charity. The jurists differed in their answers to the question. Al-Mutawakkil sent someone for ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Mūsa b. Ja‘far, peace be upon them, to ask him the same question.

Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, answered:

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadhkira khawāṣ al-ummah*, p. 359 & 360.

يتصدق بثلاثة وثمانين دينار.

He should give eighty-three dinars as charity.

Everyone was taken aback hearing this ruling, and some disapproved of it criticizing al-Mutawakkil: ‘O Commander of the Faithful! Will you ask this person as to where he got such a ruling from?’

Al-Mutawakkil sent his agent to Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, to tell him the story. The Imam answered:

في هذا الوفاء بالندى لأن الله تعالى قال «لقد نصركم في مواطن كثيرة»<sup>١</sup> فروى اهلنا جميعا ان المواطن في الوقائع و السرايا و الغزوات كانت ثلاثة و ثمانين موطنا و ان يوم حنين كان الرابع و الثمانين ، و كلما زاد امير المؤمنين في فعل الخير كان انفع له، و اجر عليه في الدنيا و الآخرة.<sup>٢</sup>

‘This is the way to fulfill the nadhr since Allah says in the Quran: "Certainly, Allah helped you in many battlefields (and you achieved victory)". All of our household have narrated the number of the battles in which the Prophet participated and that of the battles in which he did not participate totaled eighty-three, and the Battle of Hunayn was the eighty fourth of them. Whatever more good Amir’ul-Mu’minin does shall be more useful and rewardable to him in this life and in the afterlife.’

Hāfiẓ b. al-Jawzī has also narrated this same historical report from Abū Manṣūr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Qazzāz on the authority of Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Ṣafḍī has also narrated this story while providing details on the life of Imam al-Ḥādī, peace be upon him.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quran( Sūra al-Tawba): 25

<sup>2</sup> *Tārīkh Baghdad*, vol. 12, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Muntaẓim fī tārikh al-mulūk wa al-umam*, vol. 12, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Wāfi bil-wafiyāt*, vol. 22, p. 73.

### Migrating to Sāmarrā'

'Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, said:

Al-Mas'ūdī says: 'Al-Mutawakkil was informed that 'Alī b. Muḥammad, peace be upon them, kept weapons in his house...tears trickled from al-Mutawakkil's eyes until his beard was soaked.'

In his *Tadhkirat khawāṣ al-umma*, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī also transmits this story from Murūj al-Dhahab. Also, Ibn Khallakān has narrated this story in *Wafiyāt al-a'yān* without entertaining any doubt about it. This shows that the story is indisputable and irrefutable to him.

Moreover, *Al-A'imma al-Ithna 'Ashar* authored by Ibn Tulūn, *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya* and *al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, have also recorded and narrated this event.

From among the more recent scholars, Al-Shaykh 'Abd Allah b. Muḥammad b. 'Āmir al-Shibrāwī, the author of *Al-Ithāf bi-hubbi al-ashrāf* has also narrated this story. While narrating this story, he writes: "Some reliable and trustworthy narrators have transmitted it..."<sup>1</sup>

### **Ibn Taymiyya's Point of View**

Having become familiar with al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī's viewpoint and in view of the explanation we provided on it, we shall now deal with Ibn Taymiyya's opinion in this regard. Ibn Taymiyya quotes 'Allāma al-Ḥillī and then criticizes him. His criticisms are summed up in the following points:

**First:** He criticizes al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī, may Allah bless him, as to why he attributed the title **al-Ṭā'ī** to Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm while he was from Khuzā'a tribe, and therefore he should

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Wāfi bil-wafiyāt*, vol. 22, p. 72; *al-A'imma al-Ithna 'Ashar*, vol. 16, p. 15; *al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, vol. 4, p.44; *Al-Ithāf bi-hubbi al-ashrāf*, p. 200.

have been called al-Khuzā'ī rather than al-Ṭā'ī.

Second: This type of story has been narrated by some people ascribing it to Mūsā al-Ridā with Caliph Ma'mūn. He says that this story is between two options: It is either a fabricated lie or it showed that the person who gave that verdict is an ignorant person.

Third: The story narrated from Mas'ūdi is false.

### **Response to Ibn Taymiyya**

When it comes to his first criticism, we say in reply: The copy that we have available to us does not contain the word al-Ṭā'ī; rather it is al-Ṭāhirī.

The book *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ* also uses the title al-Ṭāhirī. In addition, it is mentioned in the footnote provided by *Minhāj al-Sunna* that in some copies of *Minhāj al-karāma* only the name Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm has been mentioned.

Therefore, Ibn Taymiyya's prejudiced and spiteful objection is meaningless and hollow.

We also respond to the second criticism that this fatwa (verdict) – whether it came from Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him, or Imam al-Ridā, peace be upon him – as Ibn Taymiyya himself claims, or it came from other Infallible Imams, just as some ascribe it to Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, - as mentioned earlier – it has been narrated from the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them. It goes without saying that the household of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, are better informed about the statements and incidents associated with the Prophet and his family.

Therefore, one should submit to this fatwa and accept it, just as the jurists present in the gathering showed a similar reaction to this fatwa. Therefore, the stubbornness and skepticism of some people in this regard is not acceptable.

Ibn Taymiyya writes in his objection to this narration: “Because according to the consensus of biographers, the Prophet did not attend twenty-seven expeditions.”

This saying of Ibn Taymiyya is a lie and false. For example, a well-known Sunni memorizer of Hadith named Ibn Sayyid al-Nās writes about the Prophet’s expeditions and *sariya*:<sup>1</sup>

It has been narrated to us that Ibn Sa’d b. ‘Umar b. Wāfid Aslamī, he from ‘Umar b. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sa’īd b. Yarbū’ al-Makhzūmī, Mūsa b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Hārith al-Taymī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allah b. Muslim al-Zuhrī’s nephew, Yaḥyā b. ‘Abd Allah b. Abī Qutāda al-Anṣārī, Rubay’a b. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd Allah b. Hudayr al-Taymī, Ismā’īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī Ḥubaysha al-Ashhalī, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Ja’far al-Ḥakamī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Zannād, Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-Tammār, and also from Ibn Ruwaym b. Yazīd al-Maqrī from Hārūn b. Abī ‘Isa from Muḥammad b. Ishāq and also from Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad, from Abū Ma’shar, and also from Ismā’īl b. ‘Abd Allah b. Abī Uways al-Madanī from Ismā’īl b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uqba from his uncle Mūsa b. ‘Uqba have reported the same, and said:

“The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, took part in twenty-seven expeditions.”<sup>2</sup>

Al-Ḥalabī also writes:

“The part on the expeditions of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family: The battles in which the Prophet (s) personally took part were twenty-seven

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<sup>1</sup> The Sariya missions were military missions in which the Holy Prophet (S) would send contingents under the command of his companions, to find out about the enemy, carry out raids and assaults, assassinate the enemy chiefs etc. In the age of Jāhiliyya, Sariya referred to a group that was sent at night (under the cover of darkness and secrecy)

<sup>2</sup> *Uyūn al-Athar fī al-Maghāzī wa al-Siyar*, vol. 1, p. 223.

expeditions, namely ...”<sup>1</sup>

Al-Qaṣṭalānī mentions: “The total number of the Prophet's (peace be upon him and his family) *sariyas* was close to sixty, and his military expeditions were twenty-seven in number.”<sup>2</sup>

It is essential not to overlook Imam Hadi's (peace be upon him) response after elucidating the verdict, emphasizing that giving more charity yields greater benefit, earning him reward both in this life and the hereafter."

When it comes also to the third objection raised by Ibn Taymiyya, a few points need to be recalled:

1. This narration has also been transmitted on the authority of scholars other Mas'ūdi. Those are scholars and historians whom Ibn Taymiyya does not level any accusation against.
2. Yes, there are also fabricated stories in Murūj al-Dhahab, but this does not necessarily prove the falsehood of the entire contents of the book. Similarly, in other historical and hadith books, including those considered authentic and reputable, there are instances of fabricated stories.

Regarding this narration, it must be mentioned that this narration has been transmitted by sources other than Mas'ūdī. Additionally, there are indications that suggest the authenticity of this hadith. These verses are also found in the book *'Uyūn al-Akḥbār* by al-Dīnawarī al-Marwazī better known simply as Ibn Qutaybah (who passed away in the year 276 Hijri). It means that decades before Mas'ūdī, these poems were also reported some other scholars. He says, "I have been informed that it has been recited on the grave in Sham (Damascus) like this."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Sīra al-Ḥalabiyya*, vol. 2, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Mawāhib al-Daniyya*, vol. 3, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> *'Uyūn al-Akḥbār*, vol. 4, p. 303, Chapter on “Piety”.

3. Moreover, Mas‘ūdī is an individual who is recognized and praised by prominent figures among the Ahl al-Sunnah. Ya‘qūbī mentions about him:

‘Alī b. Husayn b. ‘Alī Mas‘ūdī, a historian whose *kunya* is Abū al-Ḥasan, is one of the descendants of ‘Abdullah b. Mas‘ūd, a companion of the Prophet. He is of Baghdadi origin. Among his notable works are "Murūj al-Dhahab" and "Ma‘ādin al-Jawāhir."<sup>1</sup>

Dhahabi also mentions about him:

“Mas‘ūdī, the author of *"Murūj al-Dhahab"* and other historical books, was an Akhbārī<sup>2</sup> and compiler of various reports and texts, presenting astonishing and interesting content. He was affiliated with the Mu‘tazila school of thought and obtained narrations from Abū Khalīfa al-Jamhī, Naftawiyya, and a group of narrators. He passed away in the month of Jumada al-Thānī in the year 345 hegira.”<sup>3</sup>

In his books *"Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz"* and *"Al-‘Ibar"*, Al-Dhahabī has used similar statements to indicate that Mas‘ūdī was among those who passed away in the year 345 hegira.<sup>4</sup>

Muḥammad Shākir al-Kutubī also says about him:

“Mas‘ūdī, the author of historical books such as "Murūj al-Dhahab," was a knowledgeable individual, an authority, and a compiler of interesting and rare content. He passed away in the year 346 of the Islamic lunar calendar.”<sup>5</sup>

4. In addition, he is recognized as a jurist in the Shafī‘ī school.

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<sup>1</sup> Mu‘jam al-Udabā’, vol. 13, p. 90

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted that the “Akhbārī”, when used in Sunni sources, refers to someone who collects historical reports.

<sup>3</sup> Siya A‘lām al-Nubalā’, vol. 15, p. 569.

<sup>4</sup> *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3, p. 857; *al-‘Ibar*, vol. 2, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> *Fawāt al-Wafiyāt*, vol. 3, p. 12.

Sabkī writes in his book:

“‘Alī b. Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī Mas‘ūdī was the author of historical books such as "Murūj al-Dhahab fī Akhbār al-Dunyā" and other books... He was an Akhbārī, a *mufīī*, and the author of books with remarkable and rare content. He has heard narrations from so and so.”

It is said that he was a Mu‘tazilite and passed away in the year 345 or 346 after hegira. He is known to have recorded the statements of Abū al-‘Abbās b. Sarīj in a short compilation called "*Risālat al-Bayān an Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*." This document, which is available to me, comprises around 15 sheets of paper.

Mas‘ūdī mentions in the beginning of this document that he attended the teachings of Abū al-‘Abbās in Baghdad. Abū al-‘Abbās was ill at the time and passed away in the year 306 of the Islamic lunar calendar. Some prominent figures from various schools, including Shāfi‘ī, Mālikī, Kūfī, Dāwūdī<sup>1</sup>, and other non-Mu‘atazilite sects, had come to visit him during his illness.

While Abū al-‘Abbās was speaking with one of the scholars of the Mālikī school, an individual entered the gathering and handed a sealed letter to Judge Abū al-‘Abbās.

He also read out the letter and it transpired that he had come to deliver the message on behalf of a group of jurists who hailed from Shāsh. The letter informed him that people in that township as well as in Farghāna followed various jurists and acted according to the legal opinions (fatwas) issued by jurists from different regions. These were jurists who had their own books and independent legal opinions.

They requested Abū al-‘Abbās to write a treatise for them that would be based on the principles of the Shāfi‘ī, Mālik,

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<sup>1</sup> They are followers of Dāwūd b. ‘Alī Iṣfahānī.



Sufyan al-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfa, and his two disciples (Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Shaybānī and Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf Anṣārī), as well as Dāwūd b. ‘Alī Iṣfahānī. They wanted the treatise to be written in simple language so that it could be understood by ordinary people. This is how Qāḍī Abū al-‘Abbās wrote the treatise. According to Mas‘ūdī, he dictated it to some individuals, while others were unable to reproduce it due to their inability to spell. Therefore, in his presence, it was read aloud, and Mas‘ūdī was among those who listened to it.”<sup>1</sup>

In the biographical accounts provided by these authorities, such as the one mentioned by Mas‘ūdī, where the title of his book "Murūj al-Dhahab" is also mentioned, we do not find any shortcoming or weakness in Mas‘ūdī. On the contrary, he is described as a Shafī‘ī jurist more focused on history and mention accounts about people. However, in his *Lisān al-Mizān*, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī mentions his name but he does not does not speak of him favorably.

Notably, this lack of detailed mention is not due to any perceived weakness in Mas‘ūdī himself but rather because Mas‘ūdī’s books include virtues and merits of Imam ‘Alī (peace be upon him) and the rest of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

His works abound with content that suggests his affiliation with Shiite and Mutazilite doctrines. He even wrote negatively about the son of ‘Umar, mentioning that he refrained from pledging allegiance to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, but later pledged allegiance to Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya and Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, who was the representative of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān. He extensively quoted such statements. Among his statements regarding Imam ‘Alī (peace be upon him), he

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<sup>1</sup>*Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyya al-Kubra*, vol. 3, p. 456.

asserts: "The causes of the superiority of the companions over each other are the following:

Excelling others in believing in the Messenger of Allah, migrating with him, supporting him, familial relationship with the Prophet, sacrificing for the sake of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), knowledge, contentment, striving (jihad), piety, asceticism, acting as a judge and issuing religious rulings.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, has attained the most elevated status in these virtues and possesses additional qualities related to the hereafter. Furthermore, he is the most beloved creature in the eyes of the Prophet, and...”<sup>1</sup>

We can see that Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī neither considers Mas‘ūdī as weak nor accuses him of falsehood or tampering with the narrations. Instead, the bulk of what he quotes from Mas‘ūdī relates to his belief in the superiority of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī (peace be upon him) over other companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

This belief is not recent inasmuch as many companions, followers, and other Muslims have held and continue to hold this belief.

From what has been mentioned, Ibn Taymiyya's unfavorable opinion of Mas‘ūdī and the author of *Murūj al-Dhahab* becomes clear. It is also evident that in *Murūj al-Dhahab* and other works authored by Mas‘ūdī, there are statements that Ibn Taymiyya does not like. It has been noted previously that whenever Ibn Taymiyya senses that someone has the slightest inclination or tendency towards the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, he quickly launches an attack against him.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, p. 224.



## **Part Three**

**Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī**  
(peace be upon him)

## **The Most Distinguished Personality**

The eminent scholar, ‘Allāma Hillī, may Allah have mercy on him, writes:

*"The most distinguished personality is Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him, the son of Imam al-Hādī, peace be upon him. This honorable, virtuous, knowledgeable, and preeminent individual was the best person of his time. Scholars from the Ahl al-Sunnah have transmitted numerous narrations from him."*

Now, after quoting the words of ‘Allāma Hillī, let's elaborate on these statements.

### **Ibn Taymiyya's Illusory View**

Ibn Taymiyya writes about this as follows:

"These statements are also among the false statements made before, and they are nothing but baseless claims and blatant lies. Because the scholars who were present during the time of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, may peace be upon them, and who were well-known for their narrations and knowledge, have not transmitted any famous narration from him. We do not find such a narration in the books of scholars and great figures of the Sunni community, namely al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī, and Ibn Mājah, who lived during his time or shortly before or after him.

Ibn ‘Asākir has mentioned the names of these great scholars.<sup>1</sup> However, we do not see that any of the authors of the Six Books has narrated from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, may peace be upon them.

This is while they have narrated from thousands of people from the people of Hadith.

Therefore, how does Hillī write: 'The Ahl al-Sunnah has narrated extensively from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, may peace be upon them'?

Where are these narrations?

That he says: 'He was the most distinguished of his contemporaries' is also a statement in line with the false claims made so far."<sup>2</sup>

## Getting to Know Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī Better

In the beginning, we must get to know Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) better. He, our master, Imam Ḥasan, bearing the title "Zakī, the Righteous and the Virtuous" is the son of Imam al-Hādī, the son of Imam al-Jawād, the son of Imam al-Riḍā, peace be upon them.

Due to residing with his honorable father in the region of ‘Askar in Samarra, he was given the name al-‘Askarī. Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) is rightfully the Imam after his honorable father, who was poisoned and martyred by the orders of the ‘Abbāsīd caliph.

From the inception of the oppressive rule under Mutawakkil until the final moments of his life, Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) confronted a continuum of injustices,

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<sup>1</sup> It refers to the book “*al-Mu‘jam al-mushtamil ‘alā dhikr asmā’ shuyūkh al-a‘imma al-nubl*” which Ibn ‘Asākir authored to mention the narrators of the sixth authentic books.

<sup>2</sup> *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 2, p. 131.

oppressions, and tribulations reminiscent of those experienced by his venerable father. The injustices he suffered could have been even severer and more oppressive.

The Abbasids harbored animosity towards the Ahlul Bayt (peace be upon them), so much so that they imprisoned him for a period. It is even reported that Mu'tamid, in an attempt to assassinate him, instructed one of his servants to take Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī (peace be upon him) to Kūfa and secretly kill him on the way, so that no one would be aware. However, Allah decreed that Mu'tamid himself be killed by the same servant.

After Mu'tamid, the rule passed to Mu'taḍid, the son of Mutawakkil. He, too, inherited the enmity and hostility towards the progeny of the Prophet (peace be upon them). Mu'taḍid ordered the imprisonment of Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī (peace be upon him) once again. When he was assured that the Imam was not planning to rise against him and seize power, he released him.

Yet, after that, this noble personality remained under the intense scrutiny of the oppressive government in his residence. This continued until the year 260 AH when he, at the age of 28, ascended to the highest realm and chose his abode in Paradise. He was buried beside the grave of his honorable father in that same house, which has now become a magnificent place where believers visit, engage in pilgrimage, and worship. Yes, the short life of Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī (peace be upon him) unfolded in this manner.

Therefore, it is fair to say that, given the short duration of Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī's life, which was spent in prison or under the surveillance of the oppressive government, and considering that people, companions, and relatives were prohibited from visiting him, making it impossible to disseminate his sayings widely, the narrations that have reached us from the collection of the traditions of Imam

Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) are indeed quite numerous.

On the other hand, it is clear that the followers of these tyrants of the time never approached Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) to hear from him or narrate his sayings. This is especially true because such an act would have put their lives at risk.

After the lifetime of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him), there were those who emerged on the scene with the same mentality as those kings, rising against the Imam and attempting to diminish his stature and status to the extent that they reject narrations present in both Shī‘a and Sunni literature about Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) or writings that describe his knowledge, greatness, and excellence during his time.

Certainly, the Nāṣibīs (opponents of Ahl al-Bayt) seek to extinguish the light of God. Some choose the path of confrontation, torture, and killing, while others refrain from narrating traditions and reports related to them. Another group denies and contradicts facts regarding those leaders. However, God does not allow His light to be extinguished.

In any case, we have learned that during the time of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him), the rulers of that era did not allow scholars and the general public to have any contact with him and benefit from his wisdom and knowledge. On the other hand, the lifespan of this noble figure was short, and most of this brief period was spent in prison. When we ask these opponents why some companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him and his family), especially those three individuals, did not narrate much in the field of interpreting the Qur'an, expressing judgments, traditions, and teachings, they respond: It is because they did not live long enough to do so.



Al-Suyūṭī writes about this as follows: "Among the four caliphs, the majority of traditions are narrated from ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him). The traditions of the other three caliphs are very few due to their early deaths. Abū Bakr, in particular, has a limited number of narrations. This scarcity is attributed to his premature death. In the field of Qur’anic interpretation, Abū Bakr’s narrations are very few; they do not exceed ten. However, numerous traditions have been narrated from Imam ‘Alī (peace be upon him)."<sup>1</sup>

In this way, they make justifications and excuses for their chosen authorities, excuses that are not acceptable. However, when it comes to someone like Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him), they refuse to acknowledge the truth, and instead take recourse to such preposterous claims.

### **Answering Ibn Taymiyya’s Illusory Opinion**

Ibn Taymiyya says:

“The scholars of Hadith, Bukhārī and others, who were present during the time of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, may peace be upon them, and who were well-known for their narrations and knowledge, have not transmitted any narration from him.”

The reason is the same as previously detailed. Therefore, their failure to narrate about Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) is on account of their misfortune and lack of success, and it does not signify the weakness of the Imam (peace be upon him). By examining Bukhārī’s personality, whom Sunni Muslims consider among the foremost authorities, this matter becomes clearer.

The notable figures who lived in Bukhārī’s time in his hometown prohibited hearing and transmitting narrations from him, expelling him from that region. Al-Dhahabī

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, vol. 4, p. 233.

writes: "Al-Ḥākīm al-Nīshābūrī said: I heard from Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, who said: When Bukhārī settled in Nīshābūr, Muslim b. Ḥajjāj went to see him multiple times. When a disagreement arose between Dhahli and Bukhārī regarding the created nature of the Quran, Dhahli opposed him and forbade people from associating with him.

At that time, no one went to Bukhārī except for Muslim b. Ḥajjāj. One day, Dhahli announced: Whoever accepts the statement 'the Quran is created' should not be present in my lessons. It was then that Muslim took off his robe, put all the narrations he had taken from Dhahabi, and sent them back to Dhahli. Muslim openly expressed his belief in the created nature of the Quran and did not hide it.

He also said: I heard from Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, the Mu‘azzin, that Abū Hamid b. Sharqī said: Once, I was present in the assembly of Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā when he said: Whoever believes that the words of the Quran are created should not be present in our assembly. Muslim b. Hajjaj also got up and left.

Aḥmad b. Maṣṣūr Shirāzī also narrates this story from Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb and adds this statement: Aḥmad b. Salama behaved the same way as Muslim did.

Aḥmad b. Maṣṣūr Shirāzī says: I heard from Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb Akram, who said: Our companions say that when Muslim and Aḥmad b. Salama stood up from the assembly, Dhahli said: This is the place where I or he should live.

Bukhārī also feared and migrated from there."<sup>1</sup>

And then! ‘Allāma Ḥillī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, is one of the great scholars in the field of biographical evaluation (Rijāl). He is better familiar with the companions of the infallible Imams, peace be upon them. In this regard,

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<sup>1</sup> *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 12, p. 456.

he has also written several books. He states, "The Ahl al-Sunnah have narrated numerous reports from Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him."

In his book *"al-Khulāṣa fī ‘Ilm al-Rijāl,"* he mentions the names of many companions of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him. Most of these companions are from Ahl al-Sunnah. On the other hand, reports, narrations, and statements found in non-Shi'a books confirm ‘Allāma Ḥillī's words that "he was a scholar, virtuous, ascetic, and the most outstanding personality of his time, and the Ahl al-Sunnah have also extensively narrated from him."

### **Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) and Narrators from the Ahl al-Sunnah:**

Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī writes: "I swear by God and for God, I testify that Judge Abū Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Qazvīnī in Baghdad used to say: I swear by God and for God, I remember that Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullah b. Quḍā‘a used to say: I swear by God and for God, I remember hearing from Qāsim b. ‘Alā Hamedānī, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I pledge allegiance from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Riḍā, peace be upon him, who also used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Mūsā, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father Mūsā b. Ja‘far, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father Ja‘far b. Muḥammad, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn, who used to say: I swear by God and for God, I heard from my father Ḥusayn

b. ‘Alī, who heard from ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon them, saying:

I swear by God and for God, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said: I swear by God and for God, Gabriel said to me:

يا محمد، إن مدمن الخمر كعابد الاوثان.

'O Muḥammad, verily, the habitual drinker of wine is like a worshiper of idols.'

"This narration is authentic and established. The pure progeny of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, have transmitted it. We have conveyed this hadith, swearing by God and for God, solely relying on the testimony of this shaykh."<sup>1</sup>

Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī also speaks about Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him. He was a knowledgeable, trustworthy, and reliable individual. He has narrated various valuable hadiths on the authority of his father from his forefather. One of the hadith he has transmitted is about wine. In his book 'Tahrim al-Khamr, my grandfather Abū al-Faraj, has narrated it. I have seen the handwriting of my grandfather, and I heard him say:

I swear by God, I heard from Husayn b. ‘Alī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from Abdullah b. ‘Aṭā Hirawī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. Abī ‘Ubayd al-Bayhiqī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from Abū ‘Abdullah Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Dinawarī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn Alawi, who said: I swear by God, I heard from Aḥmad b. Ubaidullah Sabi'i [Shi'a], who said: I swear by God, I heard from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, who said: I swear

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<sup>1</sup> *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, vol. 3, p. 203.

by God, I heard from my father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Mūsā, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father Mūsā, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father Ja‘far b. Muḥammad, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn, who said: I swear by God, I heard from my father Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, who heard from ‘Alī b. ‘Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon them, saying:

"I swear by God, I heard from Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, saying: I swear by God, I heard from Gabriel saying: I swear by God, I heard from Michael saying: I swear by God, I heard from Israfil saying: I swear by God, it is written on the Preserved Tablet that I heard from the Lord saying:

شارب الخمر كعابد وثن

"An habitual drinker of wine is like a worshiper of idols."

Sibt b. al-Jawzī continues, saying: At the time when my grandfather narrates this hadith in the book '*Taḥrīm al-Khamr*', he says, 'Abū Nu‘aym Faḍl b. Dukayn narrates: This hadith is authentic and established; the pure progeny of the Prophet, peace be upon them, have transmitted it. Some groups have also narrated this hadith from the Prophet of God, peace be upon him and his family.'<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī also writes: 'Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullah, a Shī‘a from Baghdad, narrates from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, peace be upon them. Then he brings a chain of narrators in which the phrase "I swear by God" is present throughout, until the chain reaches Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Husseïn b. ‘Alī, peace be upon them. He says, 'I swear by God, Aḥmad b.

<sup>1</sup> Mir‘āt al-Zamān written by Ibn al-Jawzī, manuscript; *Tadhkirat al-Ummah*, p. 362.

‘Abdullah, a Shia from Baghdad, narrated it to me: I swear by God, I heard from Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī, who said: I swear by God, my father ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, peace be upon them, narrated it to me and said: I swear by God, my father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Musa al-Riḍā narrated it to me.’

He then transmits this chain by mentioning the names of the fathers of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, peace be upon him, until it reaches Imam ‘Alī, peace be upon him. He also says, 'I swear by God...''<sup>1</sup>

‘Abd al-‘Azīz Janābadhī, quoting from his teachers, narrates from Ḥāfiẓ Balāzrī as follows:

Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Musa, peace be upon them, who, according to the Shia, was the Imam of his time, narrated in Mecca: My father ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, known as 'al-Muḥḥī' said: My father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, 'al-Sayyid al-Mahjūb,' said: My father ‘Alī b. Musa al-Riḍā’ narrated to me: My father Musa b. Ja'far, 'al-Murtaḍā,' said to me: My father Ja'far b. Muḥammad, 'al-Ṣādiq,' narrated: My father Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, 'āl-Bāqir,' transmitted: My father ‘Alī b. Ḥusay, 'Zain al-Abidin,' said to me: My father Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, 'The Master of the Youth of Paradise' said: My father ‘Alī b. Abī Talib, 'Sayyid al-Awṣiyā’' narrated: Muḥammad b. Abdullah, 'Sayyid al-Anbiyā’' narrated to me: Gabriel, 'Sayyid al-Malā’ika', said to me: Allah, 'the Master of Masters' says:

إني أنا الله لا إله إلا أنا، فمن أقر لي بالتوحيد دخل حصني ومن دخل حصني أمن من عذابي.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 1, p. 209. This report is also available in *Mizān al-‘Iṭidāl* by Abū al-Faḍl b. Ḥusayn as mentioned by Ibn Ḥajar in *Lisān al-Mizān* vol. p. 4. Therefore the first narrator in the chain of transmission is this Ḥāfiẓ of Ahl al-Sunnah.

'Indeed, I am Allah; there is no god but Me. So whoever excels in declaring My oneness enters My sanctuary, and whoever enters My sanctuary is safe from My punishment.'"<sup>1</sup>

### **Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) and Reports from the Unseen**

Some narrations mention that during the time of Mu‘tamid Abbasid, a severe drought occurred in Samarra. Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) was in prison at that time. Mu‘tamid ordered the people to leave the city to pray for rain. They went outside the city for three days, prayed, but no rain came.

On the fourth day, a Christian monk came to the desert, accompanied by other Christians and monks. Among them was a monk; whenever he raised his hands towards the sky, rain would continuously and consistently pour down. The next day, the Christians did the same, and rain fell again. People were amazed by this, and some became doubtful and suspicious, to the extent that some converted to Christianity.

This situation troubled Mu‘tamid greatly. For this reason, he ordered Ṣāliḥ b. Waṣīf in the following manner: "Release Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan al-‘Askarī and bring him to me!" When Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (AS) came to Mu‘tamid, Mu‘tamid addressed him: "Help the ummah of Muḥammad

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<sup>1</sup> Ma‘ālim al-‘Itra al-Nabawiyya, by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Maḥmūd, better known as Ibn al-Akhḍar Janābadhī (d. 611 AH). Al-Dhahabī has described him as a knowledgeable man, Imam, hadīth scholar, memorizer, beneficial for Iraq, trustworthy and reliable, intelligent, virtuous, devout, and modest. The same characteristics have been reported about him from others. *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 22, p. 31; ‘Allāma ‘Alī b. ‘Isā al-Arbalī (d. 693 AH) has narrated this tradition from him.

See *Shudhurāt al-Dhahab, al-Wāfi bil-Wafiyāt* and other books to find his biographical accounts. Also, vide *Kashf al-Ghumma fī Ma‘rifat al-A‘imma*, vol. 2, p. 403 – 404.

(peace be upon him and his family) who are suffering from the calamities that have befallen them."

Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) said: "Instruct the Christians to go outside the city for the third day as well."

Mu‘tamid asked, "People have become needless of rain. What is the benefit of this?"

The Imam replied: "To remove their doubt and what has befallen them."

For this reason, the caliph ordered the Catholics and the monks: "Go outside the city for the third day, just like before, and the people should also leave the city."

Following this command, the Christians left the city, and Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) accompanied by a group of Muslims also left the city.

The Christians, as usual, stood to pray for rain. The monk was with them. He raised his hands towards the sky, and the Christians and monks, along with him, did the same as was their custom. Then the sky became cloudy, and rain poured down continuously.

At that moment, Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) ordered them to take the monk's hand and open his fist.

When they opened his fist, they saw human bones in his hand. Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) took the bones from him and wrapped them in a piece of cloth. Then he told them, "Pray for rain."

However, this time, when they prayed for rain, the clouds dispersed, and the sun shone everywhere. People were astonished by this event.

Mua‘tamid asked, "O Abū Muḥammad! What is this?"

Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon ihm) replied:



هذا عظم نبي من الأنبياء، ظفر به هؤلاء من قبور الأنبياء، وما كشف عن عظم نبي من الأنبياء تحت السماء إلا هطلت بالمطر

‘This is a bone of one of the prophets that they have managed to find from the graves of the prophets. Whenever the bone of a prophet appears under the sky, rain falls continuously.’

They did so to test whether it was true and to their surprise it started raining.

Then Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) returned to Samarra and his house, while the suspicions of the people had been dispelled. The caliph and the Muslims were also pleased with this matter.

Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) spoke with the caliph about the release of his companions who had been imprisoned with him. The caliph, in turn, released them in consideration of Imam's request."<sup>1</sup>

### **What have we been created for?**

Imam ‘Abdullah b. Asad Yāfi‘ī narrates the following story from Bahlūl:

“One day, I was passing through one of the streets of the city when I saw children playing with walnuts and almonds. However, there was a child watching them and crying.

I thought to myself: This child is sad because he does not have walnuts and almonds himself. I said to him, ‘Why are you crying? Should I buy you walnuts and almonds so you can play with them?’

He lifted his head and addressed me, saying:

يا قليل العقل! ما للعب خلقنا

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, p. 286; *Nūr al-Abṣār*, 339; *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, p. 124; *Akḥbār al-Duwal*, p. 117.

"O you with little intellect! We have not been created for  
play?"

I asked, 'So what have been created for?'

He said: 'For knowledge and worship.'

I said, "Well done! Where did you learn these things?"

He replied:

'I learned from the words of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ.

**'What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?'**<sup>1</sup>

I said, "My dear boy! You are wise; give me a short piece of advice."

He recited this couplet:

أرى الدنيا تجهز بانطلاق      مشمرة على قدم وساق  
فلا الدنيا بباقية لحي      ولا حي على الدنيا بباق

'I see the world as a place where all beings are earnestly heading towards departure. Neither the world remains for the living nor the living will stay in this world.'

Bahlūl (may Allah be pleased with him) said: He then stared at the sky with his eyes and pointed to it with his hands. His tears flowed down his cheeks, and he began to say:

يا من إليه المبتهل يا من عليه المتكل يا من إذا ما أمل يرجوه لم يخط الأمل.

*"O One to whom the supplicant turns,*

*O One upon whom the reliant depends,*

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<sup>1</sup> Quran 23:115

*O One whom, when hopeful, seeks,  
He who hopes in Him never despairs."*

He continued his speech until he fell unconscious. I raised his head and dusted off the soil from his face a little. When he regained consciousness, I said, "O my son, what has befallen you? You are a young boy, and no sin has been written against you. My son, I see you are wise; advise me."

He began to say:

فلت وحادي الموت في أثري يحدو      فإن لم أرح يوما فلا بد أن أغدو

*"Let the seeker of death be on my trail, eagerly pursuing, or if I do not escape one day, I am bound to meet it eventually."*

Bahlūl says, "When the boy finished reciting the couplets, I fell unconscious, and the boy left. When I regained consciousness, I looked around and did not see him with the other boys. I asked them, "Who was that boy?" They replied, "We don't know." I said, "No, tell me." They said, "He is one of the children of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allah be pleased with them all." I said, "I wonder where this fruit could come from if not from that tree."<sup>1</sup>

I have mentioned this story in brief.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Rawḍ al-Rayāḥī fī Hikāyāt al-Ṣāliḥīn*, consisting of five hundred stories, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn*, vol. 1, p.918, written by 'Abd Allah b. As'ad al-Yāfi'ī al-Yemenī al-Shāfi'ī (d. 768 AH), the Author of *Mir'āt al-Jinān* and other books. A short biography of Imam al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī, peace be upon him, has also been mentioned in *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, vol. 2, p. 247; *Ṭabaqāt al-Sabkī*, vol. 6, p. 106; al-Badr al-Ṭāli', vol. 1, p. 378 and other sources.

<sup>2</sup> You can find this story in books such as *Jawāhir al-'Aqdayn* vol. 3, p. 431; *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 124; *Wasīlat al-Ma'āl* (manuscript), Nūr al-Abṣār, p. 338 originally cited from *Durar al-Aṣḍāf*; *Jawharat al-Kalām fī Madḥ al-Ṣāda al-A'lām*, p. 155 and *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* by Bustānī, vol. 7, p. 45.

## Answering a Question about a Jurisprudential Issue

Sibt b. al-Jawzī writes:

“Ḥasan al-Nuṣaybī says: “A question came up to my mind whether man’s perspiration from Janabat (ritual impurity occurring due sex or ejaculation) is pure or not. I went to over to Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan al-‘Askarī’s house to ask him this question.

It was late at night and I slept there. When morning came, he came out of the house. He saw that I was still asleep. He woke me up and then said:

إِنْ كَانَ حَلَالًا فَنَعَمْ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ حَرَامٍ فَلَا.

‘If the impurity occurred due to lawful intimacy, the perspiration is pure and if it was on account of illicit act, it is impure.’<sup>1</sup>

## A Helping Child

Ibn Ṣabāgh al-Mālikī narrates with a chain from ‘Isā b. Faṭḥ. ‘Isā b. Faṭḥ says: "We were in prison when Abū Muḥammad, Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Askarī (peace be upon them), was brought to the prison and placed among us. He said to me:

‘Oh ‘Isā! You have a lifespan of sixty-five years, one month, and two days.’

‘Isā comments: ‘I had a book with me that contained the record of my birth date. When I checked it, I found that what he said was accurate.’

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<sup>1</sup> *Mir‘āt al-Zamān*, vol. 6, p. 192. Ibn Ḥajar writes about Ḥasan al-Nuṣaybī writes: “He is from the descendants of Ishāq b. Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (a). Abū Mufaḍḍal al-Shaybānī considers him among the prominent Shī‘a figures. He says, “I have heard a lot of people talking against him. He has a book about the paths of Ghadīr Tradition. He has transmitted tradition Muḥammad b. Ḥamza and others. Cf. *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 2, p. 191.

Then he asked me:

'هل رزقت ولدًا؟'

(Have you been blessed with a child?)

I replied: 'No.'

He prayed for me in these words:

اللهم ارزقه ولدًا يكون له عضدًا فنعم العضد الولد

(O Allah, grant him a child who will be his support, and how excellent a support is a child).

Then he recited the following couplet:

من كان ذا عضد يدرك ظلامته إن الذليل الذي ليست له عضد

A person with a supporter can overcome the hardships he encounters; Indeed, the humiliated one is the one without support.

I asked him, "O my master! Do you have children?" He replied,

والله سيكون لي ولد يملأ الأرض قسطًا وعدلاً، وأما الآن فلا.

"By Allah, I will have a child who will fill the earth with justice and equity, but right now, I do not have one."

Then he recited these verses:

لعلك يوماً أن تراني كأنما بني حوالى الأسود اللوابد  
فإن تميماً قبل أن يلد الحصى أقام زماناً وهو في الناس واحد

"Perhaps one day you will see me as if I were one of the sons of the roaming lions.

Indeed, before pebbles were born, Tamim stood living alone among people."

These lines express the hope that upon the birth of his children one day he will be seen as a powerful and influential figure.<sup>1</sup>

### **Why a False Oath?!**

Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī writes:

Ismā‘īl, son of Muḥammad, son of ‘Alī, son of Ismā‘īl, son of ‘Alī, son of Abdullah, son of ‘Abbās, narrates:

One day, I sat at the door of the house of Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) until he came out of the house. Then, I stood up and, due to a need and problem I had complained to him and swore that I had no money. He replied:

تقسم وقد دفنت ماتتي دينار؟ وليس قولي هذا دفعًا لك عن العطية.

"Do you swear while you yourself have buried two hundred dinars? Of course, I am not saying this to avoid helping you."

Then, he said:

"Give it to him, O servant! O servant! Give him whatever money you have."

He also gave me a hundred dinars. I thanked God and was about to leave when he said to me:

ما أخوفني أن تفقد المائتي دينار أحوج ما تكون إليها.

"I fear that you may lose the two hundred dinars when you need them the most."

I replied: "I have returned and placed that amount somewhere." Another day, I went to check on those two hundred dinars. I saw that it was in its place. I moved it to

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma fī Ma‘rifat al-A‘imma*, p. 288.

another location and buried it in a way that no one would be aware of it.

Then, a long time passed. When I needed that money, I went to retrieve it, but I could not find it. This matter weighed heavily on me. When I returned, I realized that one of my sons had discovered its location and taken it away. Just as Imam al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) had foretold, none of that money reached me.<sup>1</sup>

### **God makes you needless**

Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālīkī writes about another person: Muḥammad b. Hamzah al-Dawrī says:

"I wrote a letter to Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) and sent it to him through Abū Hashim Dawūd b. Qāsim, with whom we had a covenant of brotherhood. In this letter, I had asked him to pray for me to become wealthy, as I was in a state of destitution and feared losing my dignity.

The Imam responded as follows:

أبشر، فقد أتاك الغنى عن الله تعالى... عليك بالاعتصام وإياك والإسراف.

'Rejoice, for wealth has come to you from Allah, the Exalted. I advise you to be economical and avoid extravagance. Your cousin, Yaḥyā b. Hamza, has passed away, leaving behind one hundred thousand dirhams. Other than you, he has no other heir. Soon, these funds will come into your possession,

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma fī Ma‘rifat al-A‘imma, p. 286. It is to be noted that al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (may Allah bless him) has named Ismā‘īl among the companions of Imam al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him.

so beware of extravagance.'

It had only been a few days when I received news of my cousin's death and the inheritance. I too escaped poverty and destitution."<sup>1</sup>

### **The Virtuous among the Wise,**

Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī writes:

The virtues of our master Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) indicate that he is a virtuous man from a lineage of virtuous individuals. Therefore, no one doubts his leadership and Imamate...

He was the unique one of his time, unmatched, without rival, the master and leader of his era, the Imam and guide of his time. His statements are firm, and his actions are commendable.

In the sciences, he was eminent and the expounder of complex and hidden dimensions. With his discerning gaze, he made truths evident and, with his penetrating intellect, he elucidated intricate details. In his heart, he speaks of hidden matters; his lineage, his self, his essence—all are noble.<sup>2</sup>

Ḥadramī Shāfi‘ī says the following about Imam al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, peace be upon him:

He was highly esteemed and of great significance. Rafiḍī Shī‘a believe that he is the father of the Awaited Mahdi.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> *Wasīlat al-Ma‘āl fi ‘Ad Manāqib al-Āl* (manuscript).



## The Highest Merit

Abū Sālim Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī speaks about the lofty status and merit of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him):

"The highest virtue and distinction bestowed upon him by God, which has been perpetually and eternally assigned to him, and no one is his equal in possessing this attribute, to the extent that languages never tire of repeating it, is the quality that the Mahdi, who shares the name of the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his family), is from his lineage. This son is attributed to him and is a part of him. This virtue alone is sufficient and satisfactory for him."<sup>1</sup>

## Unparalleled Spirituality

Nabhanī speaks about Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him):

"He is one of the leaders of our Sayyids, meaning the noble descendants of the Prophet, and one of the chiefs among them, may Allah be pleased with all of them."

Shibrāvī, in his book "*al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥub al-Ashrāf*," mentions his name but provides a brief biography without narrating

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<sup>1</sup>It is to be noted that Abū Sālim Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa was a distinguished jurist and traditionists. He has various works. His biography has been mentioned at the end of *al-Rawḍatayn*, p. 188, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 23, p. 283, *al-Wāfi bil-Waḥyāt*, vol. 3, p. 176, *Ṭabaqāt al-Sabki*, vol. 8, p. 63; *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā’ al-Shāfi’īn*, p. 877; *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 13, p. 186; *al-Nujūm al-Zāhira*, vol. 7, p. 33, and *Shudhurāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 5, p. 259. In these works, Abū Sālim Muhammad bin Ṭalḥa is praised, and the authors of these works have testified that he was a proficient and masterful individual in the *Shafi’i* school. They have also confirmed his trustworthiness, credibility, asceticism, and simple lifestyle. He passed away in the year 652. Excerpts from his book "*Kashf al-Dhunūn*," "*Hadiyya al-‘Arifīn*," "*Izhar al-Maknūn*," and other books have been quoted. Later scholars have also relied on and quoted from this book in their own works.

any miracles attributed to him.

As for myself, I have witnessed a miracle from him. In the year 1296 Hijri, I traveled from "Kuy-e Sanjaq," one of the Turkish regions, to Baghdad. I was a judge in that area. However, before the designated period came to an end, due to the severe famine and high prices that had engulfed all of Iraq, I migrated to Baghdad. We rode on a "kalak" (a horse-drawn carriage)<sup>1</sup>. Along the way, we reached Samarra, which was the residence of the Abbasid caliphs. I was eager to visit the shrine of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him), so we made a stop there.

We dismounted the carriage to visit his grave. When I arrived at his noble grave, an unparalleled spirituality overcame me that had never been experienced before. This blessing is from him. Then, as much as possible, I recited the Quran, made supplications, and left the place.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly, before Shibrāvī, some individuals, like him, limited themselves to a brief presentation of the biography and circumstances of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (peace be upon him) and refrained from mentioning the miracles of that noble Imam, such as Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and Ibn Jawzī. Even these authors did not include any reports or events related to him. To the extent that some others have not mentioned his name in their books at all!! Meanwhile, they have named everyone, and without any restraint, they have described the situations of others with lies and false statements!! Their historical books are filled with stories

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<sup>1</sup> Kalak also means a kind of Iraqi-style boat used to cross big rivers in Iraq. See *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 40, p. 166 footnote.

<sup>2</sup> *Jāmi‘ Kirāmāt al-Awliyā’*, vol. 1, p. 389. It is worth noting that Yūsuf b. Ismā‘īl Nabhānī was a scholar of jurisprudence and hadith. He was a poet and a literary man. He had authored numerous books. He died in the year 1350 AH. His biography is mentioned in *Mu‘jam al-Mu‘allifīn*, vol. 13, p. 275.

about the wrongdoings of heretics, Turks, and other mischief-makers.

However, they do not express any reports about the Prophet's (peace be upon him and his family) family, or they only dedicate a few lines from their books to these guides of humanity, the Imams, or even ignore them altogether...!

Indeed, to Allah, we belong and to Him, we shall return. Those who have wronged will know to what [kind of] return they will be returned."

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