



## Ḥasan al-Basrī's Narrating From Sayyidina 'Alī ؑ

*Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī al-Makkī*<sup>1</sup>

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Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī was asked – may Allāh make us benefit from his knowledge – did Ḥasan al-Basrī hear the speech of 'Alī *karramAllāhu wajhuh* directly? [Does he narrate from him?] Because [most of] the Sufi masters elevate their wearing of the cloak [*khirqah*] to him and also various litanies [*dhikr*] are reported from him [Ḥasan] who reports from 'Alī *karramAllāhu wajhuh*.

### He replied:

There is a difference of opinion in this issue, most of them deny it [Ḥasan reporting from 'Alī] and a group of scholars affirmed it. Hafiz Suyūṭī said that [the affirmation] was preferred by him just like Hafiz Ḍiyāuddīn al-Maqdisī did in his *al-Mukhtārah* and Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Hajar [al-'Asqalānī] did in *Aṭrāf al-Mukhtāra*. There are a few reasons for this:

### First:

Any affirmation takes precedence upon negation [in matters of reportage].

### Second:

Ḥasan was born two years before the Caliphate of 'Umar ؑ ended. He was a discerning lad by seven and began the obligatory prayer by seven. He would attend the *ṣalāt* in congregation [*jamā'ah*] and pray behind 'Uthmān ؑ until he was assassinated. Obviously, until then, 'Alī ؑ would also attend the congregation for every obligatory prayer [*farḍ*] since he was in Medina at that time. He did not leave Medina until after Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ؑ was martyred; and Ḥasan's age at that time was fourteen years.

How can anyone deny that he heard [and hence reports from] 'Alī? Even though he saw

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hajar al-Haytamī, *Fatāwā al-Ḥadīthiyya*, pg.176.

him [and they were present together] during every prayer – five times a day for seven years?

Yet, ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī said: ‘Ḥasan saw ‘Alī and he was only a boy’

Additionally, ‘Alī would visit the Mothers of Believers [*ummuhāt al-mu’minīn*] blessed wives of the Prophet ﷺ. Among them was Umm Salmah and Ḥasan was in her home because at that time, his mother Khayrah was her maid. Umm Salmah used to present the little child [Ḥasan] to the companions [Ṣaḥābah who came to visit her] who prayed for *barakah* for the child.

She presented [the child] to ‘Umar ؓ who prayed in these words: ‘O Allāh, give him the understanding of the religion, give him knowledge and make him beloved amongst the people.’ This was mentioned by al-Mizzī and al-‘Askarī reported its chain [*asnadah*].

Mizzī also reports in his *Tahdhīb* from Abū Nu’aym: Ḥasan was asked, ‘How do you say ‘RasūlAllāh ﷺ said..’ even though you never saw him?’ He said: Everything that I say is reported from ‘Alī, except that in our times I am unable to mention the name of ‘Alī.’ That is, the time of Ḥajjāj.

And the Ḥafīz mentioned a number of Ḥadīth thereafter that he had found narrated by Ḥasan from ‘Alī *karramAllāhu wajhu*. In one such report – and all the narrators in that chain are trustworthy ones [*thiqāt*] – I have heard ‘Alī say: RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: ‘My followers [*ummatī*] are like raindrops<sup>2</sup>...’



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<sup>2</sup> The completion of the Hadīth is ‘...one does not know whether the first drops are better or the last ones.’ Reported by Tirmidhī in *Kitāb al-Amthāl* [The book of Similes] and he said it was a fair report [*Ḥasan*] but uncommon [*gharīb*].