

The Peace-Treaty of al-Ḥasan (a)

Session 1: Background & Puzzling Questions

Ambiguous Nature of the Peace-Treaty

- Some historical events become apparent over time
- Others become more hidden over time
- Unfortunately this neither falls under the first nor the second group!

It has been narrated from Imam al-Şādiq (a):

When al-Hasan bin ‘Ali (peace be upon them) was stabbed and people mutinied, he conceded to Muawiya. Hence, his followers came to him and said: “Peace be upon you, o he who has disgraced the believers!” He (peace be upon him) said: “I am not the one who has disgraced the believers, rather I am the one who has honoured them. When I noticed that you were weaker than them, I conceded so that you, as well as I, would remain among them. This is the same reason that made the scholar [Prophet Khidr] crack the ship so that it would be kept for its owners .

A Shameless Injustice

Issue of having divorced many wives (e.g. refer to Philip Hitti's *History of the Arabs*).

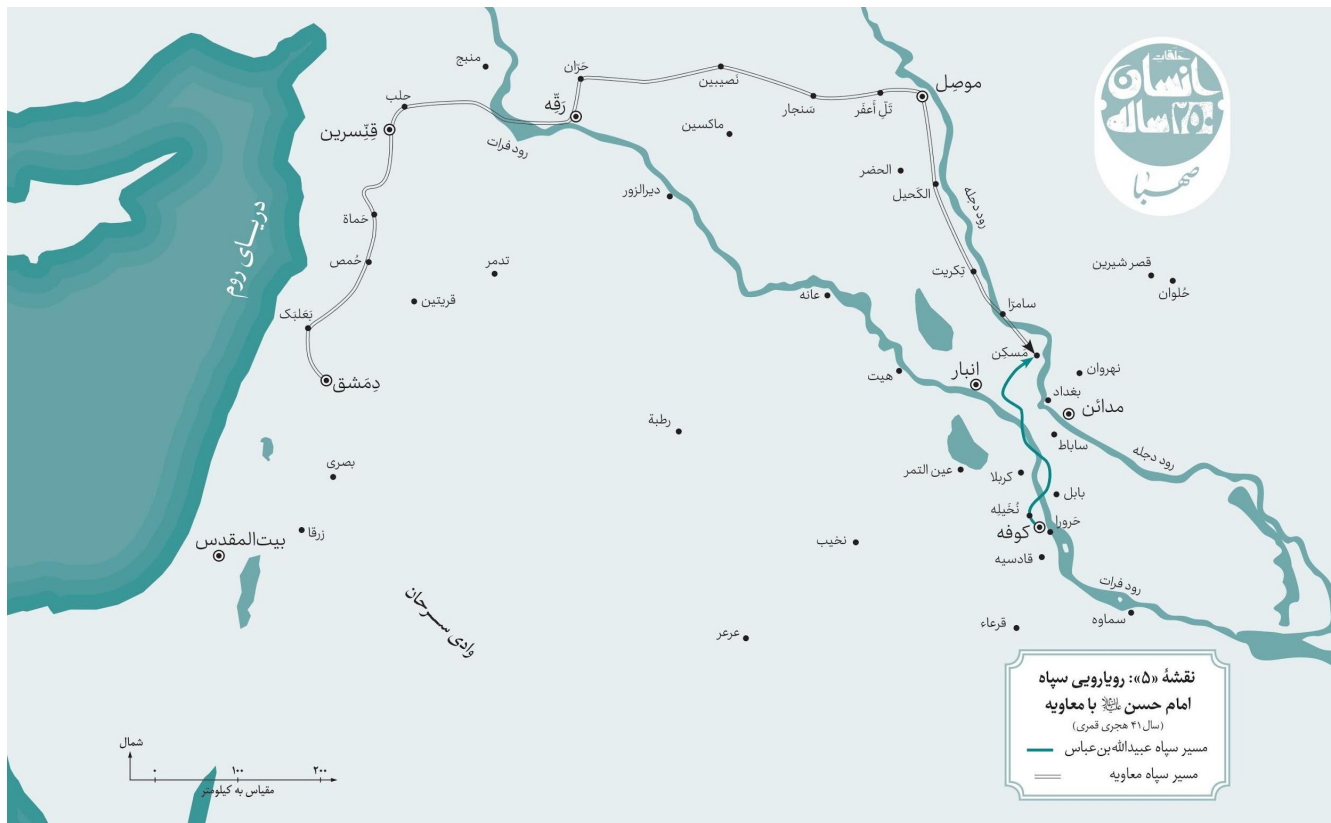
Narrated in books of history and hadith, but

- Issues in the chain of narrators
- In conflict with narrations about divorce, about being *dhawwaq*
 - How does this reconcile with his infallibility, piety, asceticism, worship?
- Names of his wives, children, son-in-laws have been recorded
- His enemies during the first century hijrah never mentioned this!
 - No companion nor anyone from the *tabi'in* mentioned this
- Conclusion: it appears very likely that this was fabricated by Mansur
 - Story narrated in the history of Mas'udi

Overview of Historical Events

- Ramadhan 40 AH • Sermon of Imam al-Hasan (a), unconditional allegiance of the people of Iraq, Iran, Hijaz, and Yemen
- Exchange of letters with Mu'awiyah
- Mobilizing the (earlier mobilized) forces, weak response of the Kufans
- Imam (a) sets out for war, himself to Madain while the main force of his army is sent to Maskin
- Betrayal of 'Ubaydallah ibn 'Abbas and many others
- False rumours being spread by Mu'awiyah
- Chaos in Madain, attack on the Imam (a)
- Rabi' al-Akhar 41 AH • The peace-treaty is signed

Map of the Conflict



Puzzling Questions

Why did Imam (a) accept the pledge of allegiance?

Why did he delay in starting a war?

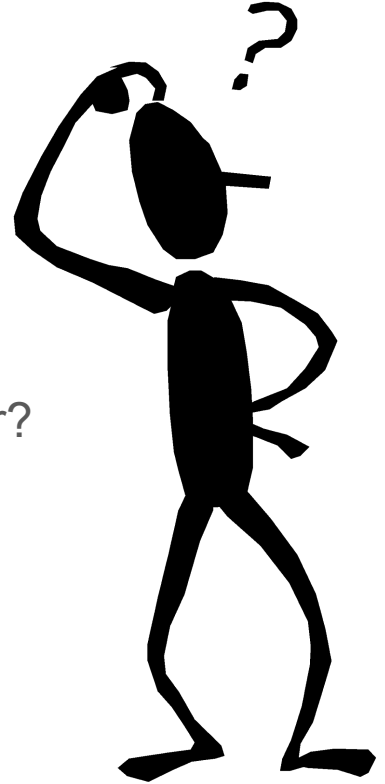
Why did he commence a war?

Why did he choose 'Ubayd Allah ibn 'Abbas to be his commander?

Why didn't he filter out the insincere groups from his army?

Why did he sign a peace-treaty?

How is this peace-treaty in line with the goals of Islam?



Analyzing the Sirah of the Imams

- They were all infallible, working towards the same goals.
- Entrusted to explain the religion but also to lead society.
- They all engaged in a struggle against the enemies of Islam, however different times entail different actions
 - Sentence from Ziyaarah Aminallah
 - Parable of someone on a journey
- How then do we understand the peace-treaty of Imam al-Hasan (a)?



Shirk against Tawhid

- Not a struggle between two rulers, rather two ideologies
- In the year 8AH the Banu Umayya had no choice but to overtly accept Islam
- Yazid bin Abu Sufyan and the conquest of Sham. Power was now back in their hands
- Stories
 - Abu Sufyan during the time of 'Uthman
 - 'Ammar in Siffin and the black flags
 - Mu'awiyah and the cursing of Abu Turab
 - Mu'awiyah and Mughirah's disgust

