

## Review of the Tradition “*isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā*” (Give me a sip of water) from the Perspective of Hadith Sciences

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### Introduction

Based on historical-traditional sources, one of the remaining sayings from Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, on the threshold of his martyrdom on the day of Ashūrā, is the passage *isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā*”, meaning ‘request for water’ by him from his enemies. Some have doubted the attribution of this saying to the Imam and have considered it a fabricated. In resolving the conflict, it is noteworthy that this saying has been recorded in almost all the reliable sources of both sects. And others, with other similar passages, have brought it in their works so that eventually many contemporaries quote it. Given that the Imam’s request for water was in line with the fulfillment of the divine duty and mission, and dignity and humiliation are in obedience or disobedience to God’s commands, also based on the Shiite principle of ‘the kindness of the Imam’s existence, and ‘the necessity of self-preservation’ from the other side, this tradition is confirmed by presenting it to a current and verbal tradition of the Holy Prophet of God, (pbuh) and his family, which is useful for the above content.

### Materials and Methods

There are two main perspectives regarding the traditional *isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā*’: the viewpoint of critics who find this traditional incompatible with the dignity and status of Imam Hussein (as) and consider it fabricated, and the viewpoint of researchers who deem the mentioned traditional credible and have cited it in their works based on various sources. This article, referencing the story of Prophet Moses and Khidr in the Quran, as well as the

tradition and practices of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and the Ahl al-Bayt (as), seeks to present an argumentative perspective on the permissibility of seeking help from others under special circumstances and emphasizes the use of critique and analysis of the traditional's chain of transmission and content, as well as the tools of hadith criticism, to achieve a better understanding of the traditional's authenticity and evidence. The research method employed in this article is a combination of descriptive and analytical approaches, which includes problem formulation, source review, analysis and critique of viewpoints, and conclusion drawing. In this regard, the article examines and analyzes historical and traditional sources and uses hadith criticism methods to assess the authenticity of the traditionals. It employs scientific and logical methods to examine and analyze a historical traditional, striving to evaluate its credibility and authenticity. The article consists of three main sections: introduction of transmitters, critique of the chain of transmission, and internal critique, in which it examines the chain of transmitters, their credibility, and the alignment of the traditional content with scientific standards.

### Results and Findings

From the perspective of Hadith sciences, the famous sayings attributed to religious saints, including Imam Hussein (pbuh), whose entire phrases are not observed in early Musnads, are not of the type of fabricated Hadiths; as the meaning of some of these sayings can be found in other Isnaded traditionals with slight differences in authentic sources. In Ashūrā sources, there is evidence that the phrase “**isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā**” has been issued by Imam Hussein (pbuh). The sources of this phrase have a historical identity and its transmitters are also renowned scholars of fariqayn; therefore, they have the potential for citation. Therefore, without argument and evidence, their traditionals cannot be rejected. The traditional in question has been transmitted among the predecessors by Ibn Sa’d (d. 230 AH) as “a’ash al-Ḥisayn fastasqā” (Hussein was thirsty and asked for water), Dinawari (d. 282 AH) with the phrases “wa ‘a’ash al-Ḥisayn fada’ā biqadahin min al-mā” (And Hussein was thirsty and asked for a cup of water), Abu al-Faraj Isfahani (d. 356 AH) in the form “wa ja’ala al-Ḥisayn yaṭlubu almā” (And Hussein began to ask for water), Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 510 AH) with the expression “wa ṭalaba al-Ḥisayn mā’an yashribuhu” (And Hussein asked for water to drink). This traditional has gained more fame among the later generations. Muhib al-Din Ṭabarī (d. 615 AH) in the form of “isqūnā mā’an” (Give us water) (Ṭabarī, 1356: 144), Seyyed ibn Tawus (d. 664 AH) in the form of “fastasqā fī tilk al-ḥāl mā’an” (He asked for water in that state) and Ibn Nama Helli (d. 680 AH) with the expression “... thumma qaṣadūhu ‘alayhi al-salam bi al-ḥarb wa ja’alūhu shilwam min kathrati al-ṭa’ni wa al-dharbi wa huwa yastaqīsharbatan

min al-mā'...” (Ibn Nama, 1406 AH: 38) has been transmitted regardless of dozens of scholars after the seventh century. Considering the works of the first reporters of Ashūrā, it is known that this traditional, from the beginning of the Maqtal writing, has been subject to semantic transmission and in the last century in the works of later Maqtal transmitters or the organizers of their works, in the form of the sentence “**isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā'**”, it has gained double fame. With the presentation of this sentence to the Holy Quran, for asking for water, which is a kind of “isti'ānat” (seeking help), examples such as Lot's request for help from his people in confronting them with divine agents are found. Also, for this traditional in the tradition of the last Prophet (pbuh), there is an example in one of the battles in which according to it, the last Messenger (pbuh) has exactly asked for water with the phrase “Is there a helper with water?”. Based on the Shiite view of Imamate, it is reasonable that Imam Hussein (as) does what is related to the divine command; it is even possible that he has been commanded to “ask for water”, to complete the argument with the enemies of God, and to reveal the peak of his oppression and the harshness and cowardice of Bani Umayyah to everyone. In addition to this, the reason of intellect and the tradition of intellectuals also indicate the validity of the issuance of this traditional; because logically, the Imam's asking for water is associated with his survival and the continuation of divine grace on the servants.

### **Conclusion**

Although some have doubted the attribution of the phrase “**isqūnī sharbatan min al-mā'**” to Imam Hussein (as) and have considered it a fabricated; but this word has been recorded in almost all credible sources of fariqyn. Given that Imam's request for water was in line with the performance of divine duty and mission, and honor and humiliation are in obedience or disobedience to God's commands, also based on the Shiite principle of “the kindness of the existence of Imam Hussein (as)” and “the necessity of self-preservation”; this tradition is confirmed by presenting it to a practical and verbal tradition of the Prophet of God (pbuh) which is useful for the above content. Also, in measuring this traditional with the reason, we find that not only is there no contradiction between these two, but the independent reason, because this traditional itself contains the completion of the argument and guidance through this means for the religion of God, puts its validity on it; such that in the tradition of intellectuals, asking for water is not a matter mixed with humiliation unlike other requests.

**Keywords:** Imam Hussein (as), Ashūrā, Karbala, isqūnī, istisqā'.