

Imam^{-asws} Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws}

Kuniya: Zain-ul-Abideen^{-asws}

Ali^{-asws} Ibn Hussain^{-asws} was blessed to Hussain^{-asws} Ibn Ali^{-asws} on the 5th of Shaban in the year thirty-eight (38) A.H.¹. Among others, names of our 4th Imam include: Sajjad^{-asws}, and Zain-ul-Abideen^{-asws}. Ali^{-asws} Ibn Hussain^{-asws} was martyred in the year 95 at the age of 57.² The Imam^{-asws}'s mother was Syeda Shahar Bano^{-asws}, daughter of Yazdjurd Ibn Shahryar Ibn Shiruwayh Ibn kisra 'A Perwiz - the famous Persian king. Imam Zain-ul-Abideen^{-asws} was the only male (grown-up) survivor in Karbala in 61 A.H. who accompanied the children and ladies of Ahl Al-Bayt^{-asws} to Sham (Syria) – to the court of Yazid^{-la}. The Imam^{-asws} was buried in Al-Baqi cemetery, Medina.

Abu Jafar (Imam Mohammed Baqir^{-asws} - the 5th Imam^{-asws}) says: 'The girls of Madina were extremely pleased to see the daughter of Yazdjurd when she was brought before 'Umar (the second Muslim Caliph). When she^{-asws} entered the Masjid it became all delightful and bright. When 'Umar looked at her she^{-asws} covered her face and said in her^{-asws} own language: "Uti, bay ruj ba' da Hurmuz (May the life of Hurmuz turn black)." 'Umar asked: "Is she abusing me?" He turned to her (aggressively). Amir-ul-Momineen Ali^{-asws} said: "You do not have such a right (over her^{-asws}). Give her the chance to choose whoever among the Muslims she^{-asws} likes and then count her to be as his share of the war booty (of the properties seized from the Persian army)." He (Umar) allowed her^{-asws} to choose and she^{-asws} came all the way to place her hand on the head of Imam Al-Hussain^{-asws}. Amir-ul-Momineen Ali^{-asws} asked her: "What is your name?" She said: "It is Jahan Shah." Amir-ul-Momineen Ali^{-asws} said: "In fact, it is Shahar Bano." Ali^{-asws} then said to Imam Al-Hussain^{-asws}: "O Abu Abd Allah^{-asws}, she^{-asws} will be blessed with a son^{-asws} for you^{-asws} who will be the best of the inhabitants of earth." She^{-asws} was blessed with Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws}. Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} was called the son of the two best. The chosen from Arabs was the tribe of Hashim and from non-Arab were the clan (Kisra) best among the Persians.

It is also narrated that Abu Al-Aswad Al-Du'ili compiled the following verse about it:

'A boy from Kisra and Hashim; the most noble one on whom sacred symbols are stitched for safety.'³

Abu Jafar^{-asws} (Imam Mohammed Baqir^{-asws}) says: 'Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} had a she-camel. He^{-asws} had taken this camel 22 times to Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) and had never whipped it, not even once.' The Imam^{-asws} has said that: 'the camel came after the Shahadat of Imam^{-asws} and we were not aware and we noticed only when one of the servants or slaves came and said: "The she-camel has gone out all the way to the grave of Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws}. She rubs her neck against the grave and moans." I^{-asws} then asked them to quickly get to her before they (the enemies) might know about her or see her.' The Imam^{-asws} has said that the she-camel had never seen the (Holy) grave before.⁴

Imam Abu Abd Allah^{-asws} (6th Imam) said: 'When it was the night that Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} left (from mortal world) he^{-asws} said to his^{-asws} son (Imam Muhammad^{-asws}): "Son this is the night in which I^{-asws} am promised to be taken out of this world." The departing Imam^{-asws} made asked his^{-asws} son^{-asws}

¹ بحار الأنوار (ط - بيروت)، ج46، ص: 13 (After Hijri (Migration from Mecca), the Islamic Year.

² Abu Abdullah^{-asws} having said: 'Ali^{-asws} Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws} passed away and he^{-asws} was fifty-seven years old, during the year ninety-five (A.H.). He^{-asws} lived after Al-Husayn^{-asws} for thirty five years' (Al Kafi V 1 – The Book Of Divine Authority CH 117 H 6)

³ Al-Kafi, Vol. 1, Chapter Ali^{-asws} ibn Hussain^{-asws}, h 1

⁴ Ibid, h 2.

prepare a stable for his^{-asws} she-camel and she should be fed properly. I^{-asws} (Imam^{-asws}'s son says) personally did as he^{-asws} (my father^{-asws}) had asked for. Very shortly thereafter the she-camel came out of the stable and reached the grave of my father^{-asws}, placed her neck on it, rolled her body on the ground and her eyes were hooded with tears.'

The Imam^{-asws} has said: 'Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} used to come out in the dark at night with a sack containing Darahim and Dananir (these were units of money) and would go door-to-door, knock on them and gave a certain amount to the person who came out. When Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} passed away, these people did not see the person with money anymore. Only then (did) they realise that Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} must have been the distributor of money among them.'⁵

Abu Al-Hassan^{-asws} (7th Imam^{-asws} – Imam Musa-e-Kazim^{-asws}) says: 'When Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Al-Hussain^{-asws} was about to leave this world, he^{-asws} closed his^{-asws} eyes, then he^{-asws} opened his eyes and recited Chapters 48 'Al-Fath' and 56 'Al-Waaqia' from the Holy Quran and said: "All praise belongs to Allah^{-azwj} Who has Fulfilled His^{-azwj} promise to us^{-asws} and made us^{-asws} to have the Earth as our^{-asws} legacy and choose from Paradise whatever we^{-asws} might like. Thus, is the reward for those who work (hard)." At that time his^{-asws} (soul) ascended to the (Heavens) and (the Imam) did not say anything further.'⁶

Our Sixth Imam^{-asws} says: 'Imam Ali^{-asws} Ibn Hussain^{-asws} (Imam Sajjad^{-asws}) cried over his father, Imam Hussain^{-asws} Ibn Ali^{-asws} for forty years – and whenever food was brought to him, he would cry over Imam Hussain^{-asws}. One day his^{-asws} servant said to him: "May I sacrifice myself for you^{-asws}, O son of Rasool Allah^{-asws}! I am afraid that you^{-asws} may die (from grief)." He (the Imam Sajjad^{-asws}) replied: "***I only complain of my distress and grief to Allah, and I know from Allah what you do not know (12:86)***". Verily whenever I^{-asws} remember the killing of the children of Syeda Fatimah^{-asws}, I^{-asws} am choked with tears over them^{-asws}."⁸

Imam^{-asws} was poisoned by the governor of Medina by the instructions of the Muslim ruler Walid^{-la} bin Abdul Malik^{-la}. The Imam^{-asws} met martyrdom on the 25th of Muharram 95 A.H. (713 A.D) and was buried in Medina. With the passage of time a modest but beautiful Mausoleum was built to house the Imam^{-asws}'s grave in 'Jannat ul Baqi', near the Holy grave of Rasool Allah^{-saww}. Shamefully, in 1926 A.D., a King^{-la} of Saudi Arabia destroyed the Holy shrine.

4th Imam^{-asws} was considered the most ascetic person of all times:

'From Abu Ja'far Muhammad Bin Ali Al-Baqir^{-asws} having said: 'Ali^{-asws} Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws} used to pray Salat during the day and night, a thousand Cycles, like what Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws} used to do. There were five hundred palm trees for him^{-asws}, and he^{-asws} would pray two cycles Salat at each palm tree.

And it was so that whenever he^{-asws} stood in his^{-asws} Salat, his^{-asws} colour would be overcome by another colour, and his^{-asws} standing in his^{-asws} Salat was standing of the humble slave in front of the Majestic King. His^{-asws} limbs would tremble from the fear of Allah^{-azwj} Mighty and Majestic, and he^{-asws} would pray the farewell Salat viewing that he^{-asws} will not be praying after it, ever.

⁵ Ibid, h 4.

⁶ Ibid, h 5.

⁷This Verse is the answer from Prophet Yaqub (in the Holy Quran) to his sons when they said: 'By Allah! You will not cease remembering Yusuf till you are on the verge of death, or until you die (12:85)

⁸107: كامل الزيارات، النص، ص: chapter 35, H. 1.

And one day he^{-asws} was praying Salat, and the cloak fell off from one of his^{-asws} shoulders. He^{-asws} did not even it until he^{-asws} was free from his^{-asws} Salat. One of his^{-asws} companions asked him^{-asws} about that. He^{-asws} said: 'Woe be unto you! Don't you know in front of Whom I^{-asws} was? The servant, it will not be Accepted from his Salat except what he is attentive upon it by his heart, from it'.

The man said, 'We are destroyed!' He^{-asws} said: 'Never! Allah^{-azwj} Mighty and Majestic would be Completing that with the optional Salats'.

And he^{-asws} would go out during the dark night and carry the sack upon his^{-asws} back, and in it would be the seed and the Dinars and the Dirhams, and sometimes he^{-asws} would carry the good, or the firewood, until he^{-asws} would come to a door and knock it. Then he^{-asws} would give to the one who comes out to him^{-asws}. And he^{-asws} used to cover his^{-asws} face when giving to a poor lest he recognises him^{-asws}. When he^{-asws} passed away, they lost that, then they knew it was Ali^{-asws} Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws}. When he^{-asws} was placed to the washers, they looked at his^{-asws} back, and upon him^{-asws} were like the marks of the camels, due to what he^{-asws} was carrying upon his^{-asws} back to the houses of the poor and the destitute(s).

And one day he^{-asws} went out, and upon him^{-asws} was a woollen coat. A beggar presented to him^{-asws} and attached with his^{-asws} coat. So he^{-asws} continued and left it. And he^{-asws} would buy the woollen (clothing) during the winter and sell it in the summer and give in charity with its price.

And he^{-asws} had looked at a group of people on the day of Arafaat begging the people. He^{-asws} said: 'Woe be unto you all! Is it other than Allah^{-azwj} you are asking in the like of this day? It is wished for during this day regarding the pregnancies that (they children) become fortunate'.

And he^{-asws} would refuse to eat with his^{-asws} mother^{-as}. It was said to him^{-asws}, 'O son^{-asws} of Rasool-Allah^{-saww}! You^{-asws} are most righteous of the people and their most connecting of the kinship, so how come you^{-asws} are not eating with your^{-asws} mother^{-as}?' He^{-asws} said: 'I^{-asws} dislike for my^{-asws} hand to precede to what her^{-as} would have preceded to'.

And a man had said to him^{-asws}, 'O son^{-asws} of Rasool-Allah^{-saww}! I love you^{-asws} for the Sake of Allah^{-azwj} with intense love!' He^{-asws} said: 'O Allah^{-azwj}! I^{-asws} seek Refuge with You^{-azwj} from being loved for Your^{-azwj} Sake while You^{-azwj} are Hateful to me^{-asws}!'

And he^{-asws} had performed twenty Hajj upon a she-camel of his^{-asws}, and he^{-asws} had not tapped it with a whip. When it died, he^{-asws} instructed with burying her lest the lions eat her'.

And a slave girl of his^{-asws} had been asked about him^{-asws}. She said, 'Shall I detail or be brief?' It was said to her, 'But, be brief'. She said, 'I have not gone to him^{-asws} with food at daytime at all, and I have not prepared a bed for him^{-asws} at night at all'.

And one day he^{-asws} had ended up to a group backbiting him^{-asws}. He^{-asws} stood at them and said to them: 'If you were truthful, then may Allah^{-azwj} Forgive me^{-asws}, and if you were liars, then may Allah^{-azwj} Forgive you all'.

And whenever a seeker of knowledge came to him^{-asws}, he^{-asws} would say: 'Welcome to the bequest of Rasool-Allah^{-saww}!' Then he^{-asws} said: 'The seeker of knowledge, when he comes out from his house, his legs are not placed upon anything wet or dry from the ground, except it glorifies for him to the seven earths'.

And he^{-asws} used to support one hundred households from the poor of Al-Medina, and it used to marvel him^{-asws} if he^{-asws} were to present his^{-asws} food to the orphans, and the ones in a bad state, and the ones of prolonged illness, and the destitute(s), those having no means for them. And he^{-asws} used to give them by his^{-asws} hand, and the ones from them who was ill, he^{-asws} would carry from his^{-asws} food to him, and he^{-asws} would not eat food until he^{-asws} had given in charity with the like of it.

And seven calluses would fall from him^{-asws} every year from the places of his^{-asws} Sajdah due to the frequency of his^{-asws} Salat, and he^{-asws} would gather these. When he^{-asws} died, these were buried with him^{-asws}.

And he^{-asws} had cried upon his^{-asws} father^{-asws} Al-Husayn^{-asws} for twenty years, and food would not be placed in front of him^{-asws} except he^{-asws} cried until a slave of his^{-asws} said to him^{-asws}, 'O son^{-asws} of Rasool-Allah^{-saww}! Is it now time for you^{-asws} to terminate your^{-asws} grief?'

He^{-asws} said to him: 'Woe be to you! The Prophet^{-as} Yaqoub^{-as} had twelve sons for him^{-as}. Allah^{-azwj} Caused one of them to be absent from him^{-as}, and his^{-asws} eyes turned white from the frequency of his^{-as} crying upon him^{-as}, and his^{-as} hair turned grey from the grief, and his^{-as} back arched from the sorrow, and (although) his^{-as} was alive in the world, and I^{-asws} looked at my^{-asws} father^{-asws}, and my^{-asws} brother^{-asws}, and my^{-asws} uncle^{-asws}, and seventeen of my^{-asws} family members killed around me^{-asws}. So how can I^{-asws} terminate my^{-asws} grief?''⁹

Bequest of Ali^{-asws} Ibn Hussain^{-asws}

'From Abu Abdullah^{-asws} having said: 'Ali^{-asws} Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws} fell ill with three illnesses. During each illness, he^{-asws} bequeathed with a bequest. When he woke up (recovered), signed his^{-asws} bequest''¹⁰

'Ali^{-asws} Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws} Bin Ali^{-asws} Bin Abu Talib^{-asws} became ill with the illness in which he^{-asws} passed away, so he^{-asws} gathered his^{-asws} children – Muhammad^{-asws}, and Al-Hassan^{-asws}, and Abdullah, and Umar, and Zayd, and Al-Husayn, and bequeathed to his^{-asws} son^{-asws} Muhammad Bin Ali^{-asws}, and teknonymed him^{-asws} as 'Al-BAQIR', and made their affairs to him^{-asws}.

And it was among what he^{-asws} preached to him^{-asws} in his^{-asws} bequest that he^{-asws} said: 'O my^{-asws} son^{-asws}! The intellect is a model of the soul, and the knowledge is a model of the intellect, and the intellect interprets the knowledge. And know that the knowledge is more lasting, and the tongue is most reckless.

And know, O my^{-asws} son^{-asws}! The goodness of the world with (all) its contents are in two phrases – correcting the affairs of the livelihood (is like) measuring the measure. Two thirds of it is discernment and a third of it is heedlessness, because the human being is not neglectful except about something he has recognised so he is discerning to it.

And know that the times are going away with your^{-asws} lifespan and you^{-asws} cannot attain a bounty except by the loss of another, so beware of the long hopes. How many hopes of the hopeful have not been realised, and amassed wealth he could not consume, and prevent what he would soon be leaving it, and

⁹ Bihar Al-Anwaar – V 46, The book of History – Ali Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws}, Ch 5 H 19

¹⁰ Bihar Al-Anwaar – V 46, The book of History – Ali Bin Al-Husayn^{-asws}, Ch 5 H 17

perhaps he had amassed it from false (means) and prevented it from a right. He attains it unlawfully and leaves it as inheritance. He carries its sin and has sold it for its burden, that is the manifest loss".¹¹

¹¹ Bihar Al-Anwaar – V 46, The book of History – Muhammad Al Baqir^{-asws}, Ch 4 H 7