

*Peace be upon You the Son^{asws} of martyred Imam Hussain^{asws}
Peace be upon You the martyred Son^{asws} of martyred Father^{asws}
Peace be upon You the oppressed Son^{asws} of Oppressed Father^{asws}*

Ali bin Hussain (Ali Akbar)^{-ASWS}

Ali bin Hussain (Ali Akbar)^{-ASWS} who was 18 years old when martyred on the day of Ashura at Karbala.

It is natural to have fervent love and respect for one's parents but Imam Hussain^{-asws} Ibn e Ali^{-asws} was the first who named all his sons 'Ali^{-asws}' and His daughters 'Fatima^{-asws}'. They were referred to 'Asghar' meaning younger and 'Akbar' meaning elder as per Arabic language conventions. However when the Persian historians began to scribe the events of Karbala the names 'Ali Akbar^{-asws}' and 'Ali Asghar^{-asws}' were introduced.

It is narrated from Imam Hussain^{-asws}:

"If Allah^{-azwj} would present me with 1000 sons, I^{-asws} will name all of them Ali^{-asws}".

Master Ali Akbar^{-asws} was gifted to Imam Hussain^{-asws} and Bibi Umm-e-Laila^{-asws} on the 11th of Shabaan 33 Hijrah. His patronymic appellation (Kuniyat) is **Ab-ul-Hassan** meaning the excellence of nobility. He has numerous titles including '**Alshaheed**' (Martyr), '**Almazloom**' (oppressed), '**WaliAllah**', '**HabibAllah**', '**SafiAllah**', '**Saddique**' (Truthful), '**Tayyab**' (virtuous), '**Mohtasib**' (chief), and '**Tahir**' (chaste).

In appearance, it has been narrated by many historians, that Ali Akbar^{-asws} resembled holy Prophet^{-saww}. His majestic and noble looks have been compared with that of Hazrat Yousef^{-as}. His handsome looks were equally matched by his handsome deeds. His nobility of character, his sense of duty, his generosity, his chivalry, his geniality, his love of justice and fair-play had endeared him to every soul, even the foes. It was a well-known fact amongst the Arabs throughout Hejaz that Ali Akbar^{-asws} was bearing a remarkable resemblance to the Holy Prophet^{-saww}. In looks, in voice, in mannerism, in gait and in every way, He^{-asws} resembled the Prophet^{-saww}. The resemblance was so marked that people from far and wide were coming to see him, to be reminded of the Prophet^{-saww} whom they were missing so much. Those who had not had the good fortune to see the Prophet^{-saww} were told by their elders that Ali Akbar^{-asws} was the very image of Hazrat Muhammad^{-saww}.

When Imam Hussain^{-asws} planned to leave Madina, the notables of the city requested Imam^{-asws} to leave Ali Akbar^{-asws} behind him so that they are reminded of their Prophet^{-saww} by looking at Ali Akbar^{-asws}.

"We cannot bear the thought of parting with your son Ali Akbar^{-asws}, He is the very image of the Prophet^{-saww}. Whenever we feel overcome by the remembrance of Hazrat Muhammad^{-saww}, we go to Ali Akbar^{-asws} to have a look at him and take comfort. We shall look after him better than we look after our own sons. We promise that we shall treat his every wish as a command. In fair weather and foul we shall stand by him. Even if we die, we shall command our children as our dying wish to attend to all his comforts and needs. His exemplary life has been an object lesson for our sons who are devoted to him as if he were their brother.

On listening to request, Imam Hussain^{-asws} replied; I wish I^{-asws} could entrust my Ali Akbar^{-asws} in your care! In my mission, he has to play an important role, significance of which time alone will tell. I cannot accede to your request for reasons, which I cannot reveal to you; but rest assured that I should always remember your kindness to me. I shall carry with me vivid memories of this parting and remember you in my prayers.

In Karbala, when no one from Imam Hussain^{-asws}'s family, except His children were left, Hazrat Ali Akbar^{-asws} decided to head towards the battleground. Abulfarj Asfahani and Mohammed bin Abitalib have narrated that eighteen years of age, Hazrat Ali Akbar^{-asws} went towards the salient, Imam Hussain^{-asws} started to weep bitterly. He pointed his index finger towards the sky and said "O Lord^{-azwj}, be a witness to this nation, I am now sending, to be martyred, the one who resembles your Prophet^{-saww} in appearance, in conduct and manners. Whenever we desired for the 'Ziarat' of your Prophet^{-saww} we used to look at the face of Ali Akbar. O Allah^{-azwj}, take away the prosperity of the world from them; Disperse their tranquillity; Let their authorities be always displeased with them; for these wretched people invited us with a promise of triumph but are now determined to shed our guiltless blood."¹

¹ Bihar-ul-Anwar vol 1 Page 264
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He then called Ibn e Saad^{la} and said "O Allah^{azwj} 's rival! May Allah^{azwj} terminate His mercy for you and may He^{azwj} take away prosperousness from your every affair; and may Allah^{azwj} appoint such a merciless ruler over you who shall slaughter you in your bed; for you have abolished all compassion towards me and did not honour my affinity and relation with the Prophet^{saww} "

After this Imam Hussain^{asws} recited the following verse from Quran which was revealed in the honour and chastity of the Ahlulbait^{asws} : "Inallahastafa adama wa noohawaaaleibrahimasamee un aleem" (surah Aal e Imran ayat 33-34). As Hazrat Ali Akbar^{asws} left the tents, it was seen that Imam Hussain^{asws} followed him in the manner that his both hands were on his back, tears flooding from his eyes and was lamenting in such a way which could make the earth tremble with grief.²

Thereafter the Son^{asws} of the Imam^{asws} , like the shining sun, appeared on the horizon of the battlefield and dazzled the entire army with His incandescent. He then narrated the following verses in His introduction: "O seditious tribe! I am Ali bin al Hussain bin Ali Ibne Abu Talib^{asws} . Our noble progenitor is the Last Prophet^{saww} of Allah^{azwj} and we are His infallible and chaste lineage. We will not be subjugated by yazid^{la} on any account. I will assault you with my spear until it bends. I will defend and protect my benevolent father with a blow worthy of pertaining to a Hashmite."

Then Ali^{asws} attacked ferociously, sometimes at the right wing and then with the same ferocity pouncing on left wing. Whoever confronted him perished and he despatch more than 120 infidels to Hell ... when the thirst became severely intense Ali Akbar rushed back to his compassionate father who on seeing his thirst stricken son, he could not control his tears and consoled him by saying "Your grandfather the Holy Prophet^{saww} will soon be offering you a drink from the Spring of Kauser " .

Saying this Imam Hussain^{asws} gave his tongue in his mouth then placed his ring on his tongue, Hazrat Ali Akbar^{asws} returned in the battlefield and even in such a debilitating thirst he killed two hundred more enemies. Munqad bin Murrah saadi^{la} said "let the sins of whole Arab be upon my shoulders if I do not make his mother sorrowful " He (Huseen bin Namir) smote the spear on his back and struck sword on his head. A wedge appeared in his head and he hung his hands around the neck of his horse. The horse went towards tents, there the enemies assailed him with sword and chopped his body in pieces.

He^{asws} called aloud "O father accept my salam, my grandfather the Holy Prophet^{saww} is fetching me water and says the same is ready for you"

Imam Hussain^{asws} reached on the mutilated corpse of his teenage son and threw himself upon him, placed his cheek upon his and said

"Life after you is meaningless, So audacious they are regarding Allah^{azwj} , how daringly they have trampled the dignity of the Holy Prophet^{saww} . It is unbearable for your father and grandfather that you seek help from them and they could not help you..." Then he filled his cupped-up palm with the sacred blood of Hazrat Ali Akbar^{asws} and threw it towards the sky, from which not a single drop returned back. He could not stop the stream of flowing tears, gave a call to the children from his camp and with their help took the corpse in his tent.

After seeing the blood-smear image of their grandfather, Prophet Mohammed^{saww} , Ahlul Bait^{asws} could not contain their grief and started crying and consoling each other. Bibi Zainab^{asws} was at the forefront; she flung herself upon the body and wept bitterly.

It is narrated by the historians that upon hearing the news of Ali Akbars shahadat, Bibi Umm e Laila, the mother of Ali Akbar^{asws} went into prostration and thank Allah^{azwj} for accepting her sacrifice.. . At this time, a messenger brought a letter from Ali Akbar^{asws}'s ailing sister, 'Sughra' who had written 'I may not live to see you my brother, please return back as your embossed foot-prints which I visit every day, are started to fade away. Before I take my last breath, please let me see you in the outfit of a groom.....'. Imam Hussain^{asws} replied to his daughter's letter, 'Your messenger had come when Ali Akbari has married to the land of Karbala, whose soil has absorbed his blood, and he will be buried here alongside me and Ali Ashgar, and will be visited by the thousands of our followers until the Day of Judgement.

² Anwar-ul-Shahadat
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The place where Imam Zayn-ul-Abideen^{asws} was martyred but was later buried in the shrine of Imam Hussain^{asws} by Imam Zain-ul-Abadeen, Imam Hussain^{asws} elder son.