

Notes

Nasikh ul-Tawarikh by Mirza Abbas Quli Khan, published by Kitab forooshi-e Islami, Tehran, 1346 (Iranian calender) is acknowledged to be the most comprehensive and accurate collection of information pertaining to the life of Zaynab bint Ali [a.s.]

The exact date of her birth is uncertain; however the most widely accepted dates are the first of Sha'ban or the fifth of Jamadi ul-Awwal of the fifth or sixth year A.H., or the ninth of Ramadan in the ninth year A.H. p.45-6 *ibid.* p.68 *ibid.* Zaynab is thought to mean 'she who weeps excessively', and other linguistic sources state that it once meant a good looking or smelling tree. The name might also possibly be a compound of the two Arabic words, zayn (beauty) and ab (father).

Not only is the date of her death uncertain but so is the place: she is variously thought to be buried (most popularly) in Damascus, but also in Medina and Cairo. There are two explanations given as to how she came to be buried in Damascus: one being that some time after their return Yazid once again sent his forces to attack them, this time at Medina, and she and other members of her family were taken as prisoners of war to Damascus where she died; another being that because of a famine that swept through Medina, her husband temporarily moved his family to a village near Damascus, and it was there while praying in a garden that Zaynab [a.s.] was accidentally but fatally struck by a gardener's spade, or fell victim to a serious illness from which she never recovered. The anniversary of her death is observed on the following dates: 11th or 21st of Jamadi uth-thani, the 24th of Safar, or the 16th of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

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