

Home > Nafasul Mahmum, Relating to the heart rending tragedy of Karbala¹ > Part 5: Relating to the number of children and wives of Imam Husayn (a.s.), the merit of visiting his blessed grave, and the oppression of the Caliphs upon his grave > The children of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and some of his wives > As regards Sakinah, daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.)

The children of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and some of his wives

Shaikh Mufeed says, that Imam Husayn (a.s.) had six children:

- (Imam) Ali al Akbar (the elder Ali) (Zainul Abedeen), whose agnomen was Abul Hasan and his mother was Shahezanan, the daughter of Khusroe Yazdjurd.
- Ali al Asghar (the younger Ali) (popularly referred to as Ali al Akbar), who was martyred at Karbala along with his father and regarding whom we have discussed earlier. His mother was Layla, the daughter of Abi Murrâh bin Urwah bin Mas'ood Saqafi.
- Ja'far, he did not have any progeny and his mother was from the tribe of Bani Quza'ah. He died during the lifetime of Imam Husayn (a.s.).
- Abdullah (popularly referred to as Ali al Asghar), who was martyred in his infancy along with his father. He lay in his father's lap when an arrow came and pierced his neck and he was martyred, while we have quoted regarding him earlier.
- Sakinah, whose mother was Rabab, the daughter of Imru' al Qays bin Adi Kalbi. She was also the mother of Abdullah bin Husayn.
- Fatemah, whose mother was Umm Ishaq, the daughter of Talha bin Ubaydullah.

Ali bin Isa Irbili quotes in *Kashful Ghummah*, and it is quoted in *Kamaluddin* also, that Imam Husayn (a.s.) had ten children, six sons and four daughters. He mentions the names of his three sons to be Ali (as narrated above), and Muhammad, Abdullah and Ja'far. Ali Akbar fought alongside his father and was martyred, while Ali Asghar, the infant, was martyred by the arrow, and Abdullah too was martyred along with his father.

While the names of his daughters are Zainab, Sakinah and Fatemah (he does not name the fourth one and probably she should be Ruqayyah, whose grave is a renowned place of pilgrimage in Damascus – author). This is quite renowned, and it is also said that he had four sons and two daughters, while the former quote is quite renowned. But his eternal remembrance and his lawful progeny is through Ali the median (al Awsat) Zainul Abedeen (a.s.), and not through any other sons.

We say, that it is quoted regarding some of his children, while others are not discussed.

Ibn Khashshab says, that he had six sons and three daughters, whose names are similar to the ones quoted by Irbili above.

Hafiz bin Abdul Aziz bin Akhzar Janabazi relates, that Imam Husayn (a.s.) had six children, four sons and two daughters. As regards the names of his daughters he is in agreement with Shaikh Mufeed. But he names the one martyred at Karbala to be Ali Akbar, and says that the progeny of Husayn (a.s.) ensued from Ali Asghar, whose mother was a slave-girl and he was the best in his age.

Zuhri says that I have not seen any Hashimite more excellent than him.

We (the author) say, that Hafiz has not quoted the name of Zainul Abedeen, but he quotes the names of Ali Akbar and Ali Asghar. While the correct one is that he had three sons by the name of Ali, as is narrated in Kamaluddin that Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) was the median, while there is difference of four between the narrations of Kamaluddin and Hafiz with regards to the number of children.

We (the author) say, that there is difference of opinion among the traditionists and historians regarding the name of the mother of Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.).

Sibt Ibn Jawzee says that his mother was a slave-girl, while Ibn Qutaybah is of the opinion that she was Salamah a native of Sindh, it is also said that her name was Ghazalah. It is quoted in Kamil of Mubarrad, that the name of the mother of Ali bin Husayn was Salamah and she was from among the children of Yazdjurd and was from among the best women.

It is also stated that her name was Khawlah, or Salafah, or Barrah.

It is related in Irshad, that her name was Shahezanan, the daughter of Yazdjurd bin Shahriyar bin Kisra. It is said, that her name was Shaharbanu. The Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) appointed Hurays bin Jabir as the governor of the eastern provinces. He dispatched the two daughters of Yazdjurd bin Shahriyar bin Kisra to the Imam (a.s.)'s presence. He married Shahezanan to his son Imam Husayn (a.s.), who bore him Zainul Abedeen (a.s.). He married the other one to Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, who bore him Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, while both of them were maternal cousins.

We (the author) say, that we strongly perceive that her real name was Salafah, which was erroneously changed to Salamah or vice versa. Her title was Shahezanan, while Imam Ali (a.s.) chose the name of Shahrbanuwiyah for her. As has been narrated, that the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) asked

her,

“What is your name?”

She replied, “Shahezanan, the daughter of Kisra”. Imam Ali (a.s.) said,

“There should be no Shahezanan (Mistress of the women in Persian) upon the nation of Muhammad (S) but should be Sayyidatun Nisa (Mistress of the women in Arabic). You are Shahrbanuwiyah, while your sister is Marwarid, the daughter of Kisra”, and she agreed to it.

While Ghazalah or Barraah was the name of another maid of Imam Husayn (a.s.), who reared him (Imam Zainul Abedeen). Imam addressed her as his mother, and it is narrated that his mother (Shahrbanu) died during childbirth, while another maid of his father brought him up. When he grew up he knew no other mother except her, later he realized that she was his maid, and people said that she was his mother thus he presumed similarly.

As regards Sakinah, daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.)

Her name was Amenah, and it is said that her mother was Rabab, the daughter of Imru al Qays bin Adi, who was the chief of (the clan of) Bakr bin Wael.

On the day of the battle of Malh, in the days of ignorance, he was a Christian, he accepted Islam during the Caliphate of Umar bin al-Khattab. He had not yet recited the Namaz, when Umar made him the governor of a province, and he had not yet witnessed night when Imam Ali (a.s.) sent a proposal for the marriage of his daughter Rabab to Imam Husayn (a.s.). She was married to him and she bore him Abdullah (Ali Asghar) and Sakinah. Regarding Sakinah and her mother, Imam Husayn (a.s.) had said,

“By your life! I cherish the house in which there are Sakinah and Rabab, I endear them both and spend most of my wealth upon them, and there is no reason for censure in that, I shall not let them be neglected all throughout my life, until I am buried beneath the earth”.

It is related that the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) took his sons Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) to Imru al Qays and said,

“O uncle! I am Ali bin Abi Talib, the cousin and son in law of the Prophet of Allah (S), while these two are the sons of his daughter. And we desire to enter into a relationship with you through wedlock”.

He answered, “O Ali! I wed my daughter Mahyah to you, and O Hasan! I wed my other daughter Salama to you, while O Husayn! I wed my daughter Rabab to you”.

Hisham (bin Muhammad Kalbi) says, that Rabab was from among the best and most learned women, and after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.) people sent her proposals of marriage. She answered, *“I do not desire to have anyone as my father in law after the Prophet of Allah (S)”.*

It is related that Rabab recited the following elegy for Imam Husayn (a.s.): *“The illuminated one who was a source of light, lies unburied martyred in Karbala, O son of the Prophet! May Allah reward you favorably with regards to ourselves, and may Allah save you from the deficiency in the scales (on the day of Qiyamah), you treated us with mercy and (according to the) religion, now who remains for the orphans and destitutes, who makes every deprived affluence and gives refuge to them, by Allah! I shall not establish relation with anyone else other than you, until I am hidden beneath the earth”*.

In the Section relating to the entry of the Household of Imam Husayn (a.s.) into the presence of Ubaydullah bin Ziyad, we have related that Rabab, the daughter of Imru al Qays and wife of Imam Husayn (a.s.), lifted the blessed head, and placing it in her lap kissed it and said, *“O Husayn! I shall never ever forget Husayn, those lances proceeded towards him who had no lineage or father (present) at Karbala and threw him upon the ground, may Allah never water both the directions of Karbala”*.

Jazari relates, that Imam Husayn (a.s.) was accompanied by his wife Rabab, the daughter of Imru al Qays and who was the mother of Sakinah. They took her along with the other womenfolk to Syria and then returned back to Madinah. The noblemen of Quraysh sent her proposals of marriage, but she replied, *“I do not desire to have anyone as my father in law after the Prophet of Allah (S)”*. She remained alive for one year after Imam (a.s.) and never sat under (the shade of) the roof of the house until she turned frail and died of anger.

It is also said, that she remained at the head of the grave of Imam Husayn (a.s.) for one year and then returned back to Madinah where she died of grief.

Abul Faraj Isfahani relates that Sakinah was along with the daughter of Caliph Usman (bin Affan) in a mourning gathering. The daughter of Usman said, *“I am the daughter of the martyr”*. Sakinah remained silent until the Caller for the Prayers said, *“I bear witness that verily Muhammad (S) is the Apostle of Allah”*. Sakinah then told her, *“Is he my father (referring to the Prophet) or yours?”* The daughter of Usman replied, *“I shall never ever pride upon you”*.

Damiri relates from Faeq, that Sakinah, the daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.), came weeping to her mother Rabab, while she was an infant. Her mother asked her as to what happened, and she replied, *“An infant honey-bee pricked me with her tiny sting”*.

Sibt Ibn Jawzee relates from Sufyan Sawree, that (Imam) Ali bin Husayn (a.s.) resolved to go for the Hajj or Umrah. His sister Sakinah (a.s.) arranged provisions for the journey for him worth one thousand Dirham and dispatched it for him. When Imam reached Hirrah (near Madinah) he distributed all the wealth among the destitutes.

Sakinah (a.s.) died on Thursday, the fifth day of Rabi' ul Awwal, one hundred and seventy Hijra,¹ while her sister Fatemah (a.s.) died the same year. Her (Fatemah's) mother was Umm Ishaq, the daughter of Talhah bin Ubaydullah. She was formerly married to Imam Hasan (a.s.) and bore him a son named Talhah, who died in his infancy. After the martyrdom of Imam Hasan (a.s.), Imam Husayn (a.s.) married

her and she bore him Fatemah.

Abul Faraj (Isfahani) says, that the mother of Umm Ishaq was Jarba', the daughter of Qusamah bin Tayy. She was given the title of Jarba' due to her immense beauty, for all the beautiful ladies seemed ugly as compared to her beauty. Formerly Umm Ishaq was married to Imam Hasan (a.s.), and when his end drew near, he told his brother Imam Husayn (a.s.) that,

"I am pleased with this woman, when I am dead you may take her to your house. Then you may marry her after the completion of her Iddah".²

When Imam Hasan (a.s.) died, Imam Husayn (a.s.) married her (after the completion of her Iddah). She bore Imam Hasan (a.s.) a son named Talhah, who died issueless.

It is narrated in Taqreeb of Ibn Hajar, that Fatemah, the daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.), was a trustworthy women (with regard to narration of traditions). She is included in the fourth category of traditionists, and she died in her prime-age after one hundred Hijra.

Shaikh Mufeed says, that Hasan bin (Imam) Hasan requested his uncle Imam Husayn (a.s.) to marry him to any one of his two daughters. Imam replied,

"I marry my daughter Fatemah, who resembles my mother Fatemah (a.s.), the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (S), to you".

1. Refer Note No. 146 regarding Sayyidah Sakinah (a.s.)

2. A period of abstinence from remarriage for women who have been divorced or widowed.

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