

## The Master of Martyrs on the Battle Field

When al-'Abbas was killed, al-Husayn ('a) turned to see none to help him against his foes. He looked and saw how his family members and companions lied slaughtered on the ground.

He heard the wailing of the orphans and the cries of the children. As loud as he could, he called out, "Is there anyone who defends the sanctity of the Messenger of Allah?"

Is there anyone who believes in the Unity of Allah and who fears Allah in our regard? Is there anyone who comes to our rescue and who wishes by doing so to please Allah?" The women's voices now grew even louder as they cried.<sup>[1](#)</sup>

Al-Sajjad ('a) stood up. He was leaning on a cane and dragging a sword. He was sick and could hardly move, but al-Husayn ('a) called on his daughter Umm Kulthum saying, "Confine him so that the world may not run out of the progeny of Muhammad (S)," so she took him back to his bed.<sup>[2](#)</sup>

Al-Husayn ('a) now ordered his dependents to be silent, and he bade them farewell. He was wearing a dark silk *jubba* (long robe)<sup>[3](#)</sup> and a florid turban with two tresses let loose on the sides and wrapped himself with the same *burda* (gown) which the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, used to wear, and was carrying his [Prophet's] sword.<sup>[4](#)</sup>

He asked for a *thawb* (garment) which nobody wanted and which he put underneath his clothes so that nobody would be interested in it and, hence, in removing it from his body, since he knew that he was going to be killed soon.

They brought him small trousers but he was not interested in them since they were the outfits of ignominy,<sup>[5](#)</sup> so he took a worn out garment which he ripped, placing its pieces underneath his clothes.<sup>[6](#)</sup> Then he asked for wrapping trousers which he also tore then put on so that nobody would take them away from his corpse.<sup>[7](#)</sup>

## The Infant

He then ordered his infant son [‘Abdullah] to be brought to him so that he would say good-bye to him. Zainab brought him his baby son ‘Abdullah<sup>8</sup> as well as the latter’s mother al-Rubab. He placed him in his lap and kept kissing him<sup>9</sup> and repeating this statement: “Away with these people when your grandfather the chosen one (S) is their opponent.”<sup>10</sup>

Then he brought him to those folks and asked for some water for him. Harmalah Ibn Kahil al-Asadi shot the infant with an arrow that slaughtered him. Al-Husayn (‘a) received his blood in his hand then threw it up towards the heavens.

Imam Abu Ja’far al-Baqir (‘a) has said, “Not a drop of it fell.”<sup>11</sup> In this regard, the Hujjah of the Progeny of Muhammad (S), may Allah hasten his reappearance, says, “Peace be unto ‘Abdullah, the slaughtered infant, the one shot with an arrow, the one whose blood was shed in a most cruel manner and whose blood ascended to the heavens, the one slaughtered with an arrow in his father’s lap! The curse of Allah be upon the person who shot him, Harmalah Ibn Kahil al-Asadi, and upon his kinsfolk.”<sup>12</sup>

Hard it is for me how you carried your thirsty babe  
And the fire of his thirst could not be quenched.  
From the parching of the sun his voice changed,  
In a tribulation from which what is solid melts.  
You came to the people asking for water,  
But how could you reach the watering place?  
For the bow surrounded his neck as if  
It was a string of the crescent wherein the star rests.  
And on the prairie, in the tents, are mourners  
Pointing to your babe with agony and repeat;  
How many an infant did their arrows suckle  
One Fatima would have rather nursed?  
So my soul weeps for him since the arrow surrounded him  
Just as it was decorated before by amulets.  
He yearned smiling for the Prophet's grandson to plant his kiss  
To bid him farewell, and what else other than  
Such kissing suits him?  
My heart goes for the infant's mother when the night descends  
Upon her, and when the doves mourn.  
In the dark does she come to see her babe  
As his mark showed among the victims;  
So once she saw the arrow in his neck planted,  
She wished she shared his arrow of death

In her hands she places him as she kisses his lips  
And kisses a neck before her the arrow had kissed.  
She brought him closer to her chest in earnest  
So once she sings lullabies for him and once she to him talks:  
Son! Wake up from the slumber of death!  
My breast should you suck.  
Maybe my heart will then calm down...  
Son! I have milk for you, and I know your thirst  
So maybe I thereby quench your burning thirst.  
Son! You used to entertain me in my loneliness  
And my solace whenever the oppressors oppress. [13](#)

Al-Husayn ('a) said, "*What decreases my affliction is the fact that it is witnessed by Allah Almighty.* [14](#)

*O Allah! It is not less in Your esteem than the life of a son! Lord! If You have kept victory away from us, then let it be so for something even better, and seek revenge on our behalf from the oppressors, [15](#) and let what has happened to us in this life be a treasure for us in the hereafter.* [16](#)

*O Allah! You are the Witness against people who killed the one who looked most like Your Messenger Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny."* [17](#)

He ('a), then heard a voice saying, "Leave him, O Husayn, for there is a nurse for him in Paradise!" [18](#)

Then he ('a), alighted from his horse and with his sword dug a grave for him and buried him; his blood was mixed with the sands, then he offered the funeral prayers for him. [19](#) Some accounts say that he placed him together with those of his family who had already been killed. [20](#)

My heart burns for his father when he saw  
How, because of the thirst, his eyes deeply sank.  
He could find no water for his babe,  
So he found no choice except to beg  
Though begging for a father is the greatest calamity.  
So how when deprivation follows begging?  
Of his pure blood he towards the heavens flung,  
How great his kindness, how magnanimous!  
Had he not thrown it to the heavens,  
The earth would have swallowed everyone.  
The heavens was painted red from his blood

Woe upon them from Allah's curse!  
And how was his mother's condition when she did see  
Her infant going through what had to be?  
He left her like a white pearl  
And returned like a red sapphire.  
She yearned to him as she would her babe,  
She mourned him in the morning and at sunset.  
My heart goes for her how she mourned her infant,  
A mourning that echoed her painful heart:  
Says she: O son! O my ultimate hope!  
O my desire and my joy!  
My milk when no water was there did dry,  
No water to drink, nothing to sustain you by;  
So your thirst took you to drink of death,  
As if your quenching rested in the foe's arrows.  
O tears of mine, the life of my heart!  
My greatest calamity that you had to depart.  
I wished you would be the best to succeed  
And a solace for me from their every vile deed.  
Never did I think an arrow would wean,  
Till my days showed him how one could be so mean.[21](#)

Al-Husayn ('a) advanced towards the enemy raising his sword, losing all hope of survival, challenging them to a duel. He killed all those who accepted his challenge, and their number was quite high.[22](#) Then he charged on the army's east flank as he recited these verses:

Death is better than accepting ignominy,

While ignominy is better than the Fire![23](#)

and on the left flank as he recited:

I am al-Husayn son of 'Ali  
I decided never to bow nor bend,  
Protecting my father's family,  
Remaining on the Prophet's creed.[24](#)

'Abdullah Ibn 'Ammar Ibn Yaghuth said, "Never have I seen someone surrounded by a huge number of

enemies and whose son is slaughtered, and so are his family and companions, and who still maintained his composure, remained relentless, and stayed courageous more than al-Husayn (‘a). Men kept fleeing in front of him whenever he charged at them, and none kept his ground.”[25](#)

‘Umar Ibn Sa’d shouted to everyone saying, “This is the son of the quarrelsome one, the one with the stomach! This is the son of the killer of the Arabs! Attack him from all directions!” Four thousand arrows[26](#) were at once shot at him, and he was forced to alight from his horse.

Al-Husayn (‘a) shouted at them, “O followers of Abu Sufyan! If you have no religion at all, and yet you fear the returning to your Maker, then at least you should remain free in your life, and you should go back to your lineage, if you are Arabs as you claim!”

Al-Shimr addressed him saying, “What are you, son of Fatima (‘a), saying?” He (‘a) said, “I am the one who is fighting you, and women are not held accountable; so, keep your rogues away from them and stop them from harming my women as long as I am alive.”

Said he: “Face me, not my women,  
“My time is come, destiny is done.”

Al-Shimr said, “We shall grant you that.”

He became the target of the fighters, and the fighting intensified. His thirst intensified, too.[27](#) From the direction of the Euphrates, he attacked ‘Amr Ibn al-Hajjaj who was surrounded by four thousand men, clearing them from the water and forcing his horse into the river.

When his horse was about to drink, al-Husayn (‘a) said to it, “You are thirsty, and so am I, yet I shall not drink before you.” The horse raised his head as if he understood what the Imam (‘a) had said to him.

When al-Husayn (‘a) stretched his hand to drink, a man asked him, “Do you enjoy water while the sanctity of your women has been violated?”

He, therefore, spilled the water and did not drink then went in the direction of the tent.[28](#)

Their blood quenches the earth's thirst  
As his insides from thirst were burning.  
Had the burning of his heart been made manifest,  
The most solid of objects would be melting.  
The heavens mourn him with blood.  
Had it only wept water for his thirsty heart!  
O how my heart burns for you,

O son of Muhammad's daughter!  
O how the foes were able to achieve their goals!  
They prohibited you from reaching  
The Euphrates river all the while,  
So, may people after you never enjoy  
The Euphrates or the Nile.[29](#)

## The Second Farewell

Then he ('a), bade his family farewell for the second time, ordering them to be patient. He put on the outer mantles as he said, "*Get ready for the affliction, and be advised that Allah Almighty shall protect and safeguard you, and He shall save you from the evil of the enemies and make the ultimate end of your affair good.*

*He shall torment your enemy with various types of torture, and He shall compensate you for this trial with many sorts of bliss and honour; so, do not complain, nor should you say anything that may demean your status.*"[30](#)

Indeed, anyone may say that that was the most critical situation the Master of Martyrs had to face that day.[31](#)

The ladies who were raised in the lap of Prophethood saw then the pillar of their security, the bulwark of their protection, the defender of their prestige, and the symbol of their honour telling them of a departure from which he would never return, so they did not know who would after him protect them from the oppression of the foes or who would be their solace once he is gone.

No wonder, then, that they all assembled and surrounded him, holding to his clothes as the children were moaning, being stunned by the situation, and little girls kept begging for security against their fear while others kept begging for water.

How, then, would have been the condition of the master of those endowed with a conscience and the example of affection as he saw, through his vast knowledge, the trustees of the Message and the ladies who descended from the Infallible Ones, who had never known before anything but honour and prestige, now running in this empty desert wailing, crying in a way that splits the most solid of stones, sighing most depressingly...?

They were in a constant danger of being plundered and beaten, having none to protect them besides the Imam ('a) whom fatigue had exhausted.

Had Job suffered as he did for one day  
He would surely have stood to say:

“This one is he whose calamity  
“Is greater than what happened to me.”

As for the wise lady of Banu Hashim, namely Zainab al-Kubra, she saw all of that. We see how the secure niche of the religion was about to be dislocated, the rope of Prophethood to be cut off, the lantern of the *Shari'a* to be put out, and the tree of Imamate to wither.

The mighty lions mourn their young,  
And their saviour when calamity overwhelms  
Mourning them with blood, so tell the burning heart  
How the red sigh does ascend.  
It yearned but its yearning is crying,  
And it mourns, but its mourning is only by sign.[32](#)

Al-Husayn ('a) turned to his daughter Sukayna who was described by al-Hasan II as one “who was always overcome by a deep meditation upon Allah,” finding her staying aloof from the other women, crying, wailing. He stood to ask her to be patient and to solace her. His condition could best be described in these verses:

This is my farewell, my dear one, and we shall meet  
On the Day of Judgment at the Pool of Kawthar  
So bid your tears good-bye and come to greet  
And enjoy the fruits of your patience forever.  
And when you do see me lying on the ground  
Bleeding, bear it and do not be by tears bound.[33](#)

It was then that 'Umar Ibn Sa'd said to his men, “Woe unto you! Attack him, since he is distracted and surrounded by his women! By Allah! Should he direct his full attention to you, your right wing will not be separated from the left!”

They, therefore, assailed him with their arrows till the arrows reached his camp and some of them pierced through the clothes of some of the women, causing them to be stunned and frightened.

They screamed and entered the tent as they looked at al-Husayn ('a) to see what he would do. Al-Husayn ('a) attacked the enemy like an angry lion. Anyone who could catch up with him he stabbed with his sword and killed as he was receiving the arrows from all directions, bracing them with his chest and neck.[34](#)

He went back to his quarters profusely repeating this statement: *La hawla wala quwwata illa billah al-*

*'aliyy al-a'aim* (There is no might nor power except in Allah, the Sublime, the Great.”[35](#) In such a condition, he asked for some water.

Al-Shimr said to him, “You shall not have a taste of it till you reach the Fire.” A man shouted at him saying: “O Husayn! Do not you see how the Euphrates water is as clear as the snakes' bellies? You shall not taste of it till you die of thirst.” Al-Husayn (‘a) said, “O Allah! Do cause him to die of thirst.”

That particular man, to be sure, kept asking for water ever since, and water was always brought to him, yet it would come out of his mouth and never goes down, and he kept doing so till he died of thirst.[36](#)

Abul-Hutuf al-Ju'fi shot al-Husayn (‘a) with an arrow in his forehead that he pulled out, causing blood to run on his face. The Imam (‘a) said, “O Allah! You see in what condition I am with regard to Your servants, these disobedient ones!

O Allah! Decrease their number, kill them and leave none of them on the face of earth, and do not ever forgive them.”

In a loud voice did al-Husayn (‘a) shout, “O nation of evil! It is, indeed, evil the way how you succeeded Muhammad (S) in faring with his *'Itrat!* You shall not kill anyone after me and contemplate on the consequences of killing him; rather, you will think very lightly of it once you have killed me.

By Allah! I hope that Allah will grant me the honour of martyrdom then will He seek revenge on my behalf from whence you know not.”

Al-Hasin said to the Imam (‘a), “And how will He seek revenge on our behalf on you, O son of Fatima?!” The Imam (‘a) answered, “He will cause you all to kill one another and thus get your blood spilled, then shall He pour His torment upon you in the most painful manner.”[37](#)

Having become too feeble to fight, he stood to rest. It was then that a man threw a stone at him, hitting his forehead and causing his blood to run down his face.

He took his shirt to wipe his blood from his eyes just as another man shot him with a three-pronged arrow that pierced his chest and settled in his heart.

He instantly said, “In the Name of Allah, through Allah, and on the creed of the Messenger of Allah [do I die].” Raising his head to the heavens, he said, “Lord! You know that they are killing a man besides whom there is no other son of Your Prophet's daughter!”

As soon as he took the arrow out of his back, blood gushed forth like a drain pipe.[38](#) He placed his hand on his wound and once his hand was filled with blood, he threw it above saying, “Make what has happened to me easy for me; it is being witnessed by Allah” Not a single drop of that blood fell on the ground.[39](#)

Then he put it back a second time and it was again filled with blood. This time he rubbed it on his face and beard as he said, "Thus shall I appear when I meet my Lord and my grandfather the Messenger of Allah (S), drenched in my blood. It is then that I shall say: 'O grandfather! So-and-so killed me.'" [40](#)

In the al-Hajeer he fell on the ground,  
Under the swords and their every sharp edge.  
The stars stood motionless when he fell,  
And their motions turned still.  
In them the Spirit mourned him as he said.  
Sadly echoing the bereaved one's heart:  
O conscience of Allah's *ghayb*, how could you  
Be the victims of their very spears?  
They pierced from behind His preserved veil,  
And swords struck your forehead and they  
Without your right hand would have had no right.  
You were not, when you were killed, weak in might,  
But no help came to your rescue  
O by your blood-stained beard, gray in hue,  
It is the most glorious of every right hand,  
Had you preferred at all in your stand,  
The fates would have made everything  
Precious for you as though it were nothing,  
Or if you had wished your foes to be wiped out,  
None of them would have remained on the ground.  
You would have removed them from every land,  
And you would have raised death-conquering hosts,  
So none would remain to light a fire  
Nor to build a fort nor a highway,  
But a band invited you to spend your all  
When their misguidance spread what was buried before.  
So you saw that meeting with your Lord  
Sacrificing for Him would surely be  
Better than to live in misery.  
You took to patience even as the deer from thirst on fire  
Striking every valiant in a way melting every heart,  
And the lances, like ribs, over you bend,  
And the white swords over you like lids descend.  
So your life did you spend among folks

Who tried to subject you to their yokes,  
Folks who are your enemy and mine,  
Born in the vilest of womb and of loins.[41](#)

Bleeding soon sapped his strength, so he sat down on the ground, feeling his head being too heavy. Malik Ibn al-Nisr noticed his condition, so he taunted him then dealt him a stroke with his sword on the head. Al-Husayn ('a) was wearing a burnoose that soon became full of blood. Al-Husayn ('a) said, "May you never be able to eat nor drink with your right hand, and may Allah gather you among the oppressors." Having said so, the dying Imam ('a) threw his burnoose away and put on a turban on top of his capuche cap.[42](#)

## Muhammad Ibn abu Sa'id

Hani Ibn Thabit al-Hadrami has said, "I was standing with nine other men when al-Husayn ('a) was killed. It was then that I looked and saw one of the children from al-Husayn's family wearing a robe and a shirt, and in his ears there were two rings. He held a post from those buildings and stood startled looking right and left.

A man came running. Having come close to that child, the man leaned from his horse and killed that child with his horse. When he was shamed for thus killing a helpless child, he revealed his last name..."[43](#)

That child was Muhammad Ibn Abu Sa'id Ibn 'Aqil Ibn Abu Talib.[44](#) His mother, dazed and stunned, kept looking at him as the incident unfolded before her very eyes.[45](#)

## 'Abdullah son of Imam al-Hasan ('a)

The enemies of Allah waited for a short while then returned to al-Husayn ('a) whom they surrounded as he sat on the ground unable to stand. 'Abdullah son of Imam al-Hasan ('a), grandson of the Prophet (S), who was then eleven years old, looked and saw how his uncle was being surrounded by those people, so he came running towards him.

Zainab wanted to restrain him but he managed to evade her and to reach his uncle. Bahr Ibn Ka'b

lowered his head to strike al-Husayn ('a), so the child shouted, "O son of the corrupt woman, are you going to strike my uncle?"

The man dealt a blow from his sword that the child received with his hand, cutting it off. The child cried in agony, "O uncle!"

Then he fell in the lap of al-Husayn ('a) who hugged him and said, "O son of my brother! Be patient with regard to what has befallen us, and consider it as goodness, for Allah, the most Exalted, will make you join your righteous ancestors."

Then he ('a) raised his hands and supplicated saying, "O Allah! Let them enjoy themselves for some time then divide them and make them into parties, and do not let their rulers ever be pleased with them, for they invited us to support us, then they turned their backs to us and fought us."[46](#)

Harmalah Ibn Kahil shot the child with an arrow, killing him as he sat in his uncle's lap.[47](#)

Al-Husayn ('a) remained lying on the ground for some time. Had those rogues wished to kill him, they could have done so, but each tribe relied on the other to do what it hated to do itself.[48](#)

A planting field for the lances he became  
A practice target for every blood-shedder,  
Dusted whenever eyed by a valiant warrior,  
Stealing, of fright, their very color,  
Greater than him no war has shown,  
As he was slain, turning each valiant a villain.  
His forehead dusted, the heavens did think  
That on the earth was its own Saturn.  
Strange how I see, O stranger in the *Taff*,  
How your cheeks use its heaps for a pillow.  
Strange how unfairly you were slain by those  
Whose fathers yours had bent, whose idols he broke.  
Should you, may the world be your sacrifice,  
Be starved, left scorched by thirst?[49](#)

Al-Shimr shouted, "What are you standing like that for?! What do you expect the man to do since your arrows and spears have wounded him so heavily? Attack him!"[50](#)

O sorrow how they charged from every side at him,  
Hitting his sacred shoulders with blows,

That left him on the ground lying.[51](#)

Zar'ah Ibn Sharik struck him on his left shoulder with his sword while al-Hasin shot him with an arrow that penetrated his mouth;[52](#) another man struck him on the shoulder. Sinan Ibn Anas stabbed him in his collarbone area of the chest then shot him with an arrow in the neck.[53](#)

'Salih Ibn Wahab stabbed him in the side...[54](#)

Hilal Ibn Nafi' has said, "I was standing in front of al-Husayn ('a) as he was drawing his last breath Never did I ever see anyone whose face looked better than him or more glowing as he was stained with his own blood!

In fact, the light emanating from his face distracted me altogether from the thought of killing him! As he was in such a condition, he asked for some water to drink, but they refused to give him any."

A man said to him, "You shall not taste of water till you reach hell from whose hot boiling water shall you drink." He ('a) said, "Am I the one who will reach it?

Rather, I will reach my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, and will reside with him in his abode of truth near an Omnipotent King, and I shall complain to him about what crimes you committed against me and what you have done to me." They all became very angry. It is as if Allah did not leave one iota of compassion in their hearts.[55](#)

Had only Ahmad seen you on the ground lying,  
He would have spread for you his very insides,  
Or had your mother, al-Zahra', seen your thirst at al-Taff,  
She would have from her tears given you to drink.  
How I wish none tastes of the Euphrates at all  
So long as the Prophet's sons its waters desire  
How many free ladies whose homes the foes did plunder!  
How their insides shared the shame, I wonder!  
They flee, yet they are by the foes pursued,  
Like wild beasts the foes ensued,  
She called upon her supporter and defender,  
Who remained on a burning ground: to death did he surrender.[56](#)

## [The Supplication](#)

When his condition worsened, al-Husayn ('a) raised his eyes to the heavens and said,

*“O Allah! Sublime You are, Great of Might, Omnipotent, Independent of all creation, greatly Proud, Capable of doing whatever You please, Forthcoming in mercy, True of Promise, Inclusive of Blessings, Clement, Near to those who invoke Him, Subduing His creation, Receptive to Repentance, Able, Overpowering, Appreciative when thanked, Remembering those who remember Him! You do I call upon out of my want, and You do I seek out of need!*

*From You do I seek help when in fear and cry when depressed! Your help do I seek in my weakness, and upon You do I rely! O Allah! Judge between us and our people, for they deceived and betrayed us!*

*They were treacherous to us, and they killed us though we are the 'Itrat of Your Prophet and the offspring of the one You love: Muhammad (S) whom You chose for Your Message and entrusted with the revelation! Do find an ease for our affair and an exit, O most Merciful of all merciful ones![57](#)*

*Grant me patience to bear Your destiny, O Lord! There is no god but You! O Helper of those who seek help![58](#)*

*I have no god besides You, nor do I adore anyone but You! Grant me to persevere as I face Your decree, O Helper of the helpless, O Eternal One Who knows no end, O One Who brings the dead back to life, O One Who rewards every soul as it earned, do judge between me and them; surely You are the best of judges.”[59](#)*

Had Isma'yl to slaughter surrendered,  
In the lap of the one who would to him have mercy,  
Becoming Allah's sacrifice and was not greeted by  
White deer, nor did they shake his hands peacefully,  
Husayn patiently surrendered his soul  
To be slain by the sword of his own oppressor,  
And to defend Allah's creed he surrendered his soul  
And every precious one so its pillars would stand tall.  
His ribs and body were by the steeds trampled upon  
As his ladies on bare beasts to captivity borne.[60](#)

## The Horse

His horse came circling around him, rubbing his head on his blood.[61](#) It was then that Ibn Sa'd shouted, “The horse! Get the horse, for it is one of the horses of the Messenger of Allah (S)!”

Horsemen surrounded that horse which kept kicking with its front legs, killing forty riders and ten horses.

Ibn Sa'd then said, "Leave him and let us see what he does."

Once he felt secure, the horse went back to al-Husayn ('a) to rub his head on the Imam's blood as he sniffed him. He was neighing very loudly.[62](#)

Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir ('a) used to say that that horse was repeating these words: "Retribution! Retribution against a nation that killed the son of its Prophet's daughter!"

The horse then went to the camp neighing likewise.[63](#) When the women saw the horse without its rider and its saddle twisted, they went out, their hair spread out, beating their cheeks, their faces uncovered, screaming and wailing, feeling the humiliation after enjoying prestige, going in the direction of the place where al-Husayn ('a) had been killed.[64](#)

One kneels in earnest at him to hug  
While another covers him with a robe,  
Another with the flow of his bleeding neck  
Her faces does she for glory paint,  
And another wishes she was his own sacrifice,  
And another does not help kissing him.  
Yet another out of fear seeks with his corpse refuge,  
And another because of her calamity knows not what to do.[65](#)

Umm Kulthum, namely Zainab the wise, cried out, "O Muhammad! O father! O 'Ali ! O Ja'far! O Hamzah! Here is Husayn in the open slain in Karbala!"[66](#)

Then Zainab said, "I wish the heavens had fallen upon the earth![67](#) I wish the mountains had crushed the valley!"[68](#) She was near al-Husayn ('a) when 'Umar Ibn Sa'd came close to her flanked by some of his men.

Al-Husayn ('a) was drawing his last breath She cried out, "O 'Umar! Should Abu 'Abdullah be killed as you look on?!" He turned his face away. His tears were flooding his beard.[69](#) She said, "Woe unto you! Is there any Muslim man among you?" None answered her.[70](#) Then ['Umar] Ibn Sa'd shouted at people, "Alight and put him to rest!"

Al-Shimr was the first to do so. He kicked the Imam ('a) with his foot then sat on his chest and took hold of his holy beard. He dealt him twelve sword strokes.[71](#) He then severed his sacred head...

## [Al-Husayn \('a\) Murdered](#)

Those folks now took to maurauding the Imam ('a). Ishaq Ibn Hawayh took his shirt. Al-Akhnas Ibn

Murthid Ibn 'Alqamah al-Hadrami took his turban. Al-Aswad Ibn Khalid took his sandals. Jami' Ibn al-Khalq al-Awadi, but some say a man from Tamim named al-Aswad Ibn Hanzalah, took his sword.

Bajdal came. He saw the Imam ('a) wearing a ring covered with his blood. He cut his finger off and took the ring... Qays Ibn al-Ash'ath took his velvet<sup>72</sup> on which he since then used to sit, so he came to be called "Qays Qateefa."<sup>73</sup>

The Imam ('a)'s worn out garment was taken by Ja'oonah Ibn Hawiyyah al-Hadrami. His bow and outer garments were taken by al-Rail Ibn Khaythamah al-Ju'fi, Hani Ibn Shabib al-Hadrami and Jarir Ibn Mas'ud al-Hadrami.<sup>74</sup>

A man from among them wanted to take his underpants after all his other clothes had been taken away by others.

This man said, "I wanted to take it off, but he had put his right hand on it which I could not lift; therefore, I severed his right hand..."

He then put his left hand on it which I also could not lift, so I severed it, too, and was about to bare him and take it off. It was then that I heard something like an earthquake, so I became frightened. I left him and fell into a swoon.

While I was unconscious, I saw the Prophet (S), 'Ali, Fatima, and al-Hasan ('a). Fatima was saying, 'O son! They killed you! May Allah kill them!' He said to her, 'O mother! This sleeping man has severed my right hand!' She then invoked Allah's curse on me saying, 'May Allah cut your hands and legs, and may He blind you and hurl you into the fire!'

Indeed, I am now blind. My hands and legs have already been amputated, and nothing remains from her curse except the Fire."<sup>75</sup>

O slain one snatched by death away,  
Without being helped, without being supported,  
They washed him with the blood of his every wound,  
They shrouded him with the earth of the ground,  
They killed him though they knew,  
That he was the fifth of *Ashab al-Kisa'*.  
O Messenger of Allah! O Fatima!  
O Commander of the Faithful al-Murtada!  
May Allah's rewards for you be great,  
For the one whose insides were killed  
By thirst till he spent,  
At Karbala' he struck his tent,

Hardly he erected it before it was no more,  
Dead mourned by Fatima, by her father and by 'Ali  
The man for him testifies sublimity.  
Had the Messenger of Allah been after him raised,  
He would have now been mourning him.  
They carried a head whose grandfather they greet,  
Be it is out of their free will, involuntarily,  
Being handled by them as they pleased.  
They neither honoured him nor sanctified...  
O Messenger of Allah! If you only eyed  
How they kept killing and taking captive,  
How they were prohibited from enjoying any shade,  
How their thirsty ones were met with the spears  
How they were driven, stumbling, one following behind,  
Another transported on a bare conveyance, how unkind!  
Your eyes would have seen a sight  
That would surely have grieved your insides  
And would surely have been for your eyes a sore.  
Such should not be how the Messenger of Allah,  
O nation of oppression and corruption, be treated  
They slaughtered like sacrifices his offspring that day,  
Then they drove his family like slaves away.  
They kept calling upon the Messenger of Allah  
Whenever marching was hard, whenever they stumbled.[76](#)

[1.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 65.

[2.](#) Shaikh Ja'far al-Shushtari (may Allah sanctify him), Al-Khasa'is al-Husayniyya [Husayn's characteristics] , p. 129. Among those who have documented his sickness during the Battle of Karbala' are: Mis'ab Ibn al-Zubayr as quoted on p. 58 of Nasab Quraish and al-Ya'qubi on p. 217, Vol. 2, of his Tarikh. On p. 32, Vol. 2, of his book Maqatal al-Husayn, al-Khawarizmi says, "Ali Ibn al-Husayn, who was younger than his brother who had already been killed, was sick and unable to carry a sword..., etc."

[3.](#) In his book Al-Kafi, al-Kulayni, commenting on the text on p. 105, Vol. 4, of Mir'at al-'Uqul 'an Al al-Rasul, where Imam al-Baqir ('a) is quoted, and also al-Alusi on p. 111, Vol. 8, of his book Ruh al-Ma'ani, commenting on the verse saying, "Say: Who has prohibited the embellishments of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions?" (Qur'an, 7:32), and so do both Ibn Hajar on p. 192, Vol. 9, of his book Majma' al-Zawa'id and al-Khawarizmi on p. 35, Vol. 2, of his book Maqatal al-Husayn, all say that al-Husayn ('a) was wearing a dark silk jubba on the day of 'Ashura.

[4.](#) Al-Muntakhab, p. 315 (Hayderi Press, 1369 A.H./1950 A.D.).

5. Ibn Shahr Ashub, Al-Manaqib, Vol. 2, p. 222. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 305.
6. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, Mujma' al-Zawa'id, Vol. 9, p. 193. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 205.
7. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 69. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 259.
8. On p. 222, Vol. 2, of his book Al-Manaqib, Ibn Shahr Ashub refers to him as 'Ali Asghar ('Ali Junior). In his book Al-Iqbal, Ibn Tawus states al-Husayn's ziyara on the day of 'Ashura. It contains the following: "Peace of Allah be upon you and upon them and upon your son 'Ali Asghar whose loss grieved you." Those who say it was 'Abdullah, whose mother was al-Rubab, are: Shaikh al-Mufid on p. 3 of his book Al-Ikhtisas, Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani on p. 35 of his book Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, and Mis'ab Ibn al-Zubayr on p. 59 of Nasab Quraish. On p. 30 of Sirr al-Silsilah, it is stated that the one who was killed with an arrow as he was in his father's lap was 'Abdullah, but he does not mention the name of his mother.
9. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 65. According to p. 218, Vol. 2, of al-Ya'qubi's Tarikh (Najaf's edition), "As al-Husayn ('a) was standing, his newly born son was brought to him. He called the athan in his [right] ear and applied the hanuk to him. It was then that an arrow penetrated his son's mouth, killing him instantly. Al-Husayn ('a) pulled the arrow out of his son's mouth and kept staining him with his own blood and saying, 'By Allah! Your status with Allah is greater even than the she-camel [of prophet Salih] , and the status of Muhammad (S) is greater than that of 'Salih .' Then he took him and placed him with his other slain offspring and nephews."
10. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 23. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 22.
11. On p. 222, Vol. 2, of Ibn Shahr Ashub's book Manaqib, it is stated that, "None of it came back." On p. 36 of Ibn Nama's book Muthir al-Ahzan, on p. 66 of Ibn Tawus's book Al-Luhuf, where the incident is narrated by Imam al-Baqir ('a), on p. 186, Vol. 8, of Ibn Kathir's book Al-Bidaya, on p. 108 of al-Qarmani's book Akhbar al-Duwal, and on p. 32, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book Maqatal al-Husayn, it is stated in all these books that Imam al-Husayn ('a) threw it towards the heavens. Ibn Kathir says that the man who had shot that arrow belonged to Banu Asad and was named "Ibn Muqid al-Nar" [son of the fire lighter].
12. This is stated in the ziyarat of that sacred place. The text of the poem that follows was composed by the virtuous orator Sayyid Muhammad Jawad Shubbar.
13. From a poem by the 'Allama Shaikh Muhammad Taqi al-Jawahiri.
14. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 66.
15. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 26. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 32.
16. al-Qazwini, Tazallum al-Zahra', p. 122.
17. Al-Muntakhab, p. 313.
18. Ibn al-Jawzi, the grandson, Tathkirat al-Khawass, p. 144. Mirza Farhad, Al-Qamqam, p. 385. In the biography of Ibrahim son of the Messenger of Allah (S), as stated in Al-Isaba (of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani), and also according to p. 102, Vol. 1, of al-Nawawi's book Tahthib al-Asma', and on p. 214, Vol. 3, of al-Zarqani's book Sharh al-Mawahib al-Laduniyya, in a chapter dealing with the Imam's sons, it is stated that when Ibrahim son of the Messenger of Allah (S) died, the Prophet (S) said, "There is a nurse for him in Paradise."
19. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 32. al-Tabarsi, Al-Ihtijaj, p. 163 (Najaf edition).
20. al-Mufid, Al-Irshad. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 36.
21. Excerpted from a rajaz poem by the authority Ayatullah Shaikh Muhammad Husayn al-Isfahani, may Allah sanctify him.
22. Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 97. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 37. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 33.
23. Under the heading "A Discourse in Literature" on p. 171, Vol. 3, of his book Al-Bayan wal Tibyan (second edition), al-Jahiz adds the following after having quoted those poetry lines:  
Allah, from this and that, is the Refuge.
24. Ibn Shahr Ashub, Manaqib, Vol. 2, p. 223.
25. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 259. On p. 38, Vol. 2, of his book Maqatal al-Husayn, al-Khawarizmi attributes this statement to some of those who had participated in that battle.
26. Ibn Shahr Ashub, Manaqib, Vol. 2, p. 223.
27. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 67.
28. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 204. 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 98. Nafs al-Mahmum,

p. 188. Al-Khasa'is al-Husayniyya, p. 46, in a chapter dealing with animal characteristics. But I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement alleging the horse's refusal to drink water and al-Husayn ('a) spilling water from his hand merely on account of what his enemies had said.

He was fully aware of the fact that what they said was nothing but a trick. But the attributes of that day with regard to the Master of Martyrs and those in his company remaining thirsty are beyond our knowledge, and we have no choice except to take it for granted that the Imam ('a), was wise in his actions and speeches, doing exactly what his grandfather (S), who never spoke out of his own inclination, had instructed him.

All issues relevant to the Battle of al-Taff are confined, in their circumstances and sites, to mysteries and reasons which only the Lord of the World, Exalted is He, knows. There is something else which was observed by the Master of Martyrs, something the Arabs used to die for, and that was: protecting the ladies with their lives. Abu 'Abdullah ('a) was the master of the Arabs and the son of their master. He was never unaware of such a tribute for which he would sacrifice everything precious. When a man shouted out telling him that the sanctity of the ladies had been violated, he refused to drink water in order to let everyone know his deep concern about his honour.

Had he paid no heed for the call, people would have concluded that he was lacking in his Arabian manliness, something that the Father of the Oppressed would never have done even if he knew that the call was untrue. The action of the master of the men of honour, his having abstained from drinking even a little of water, is a feat for which a man would receive the highest praise.

[29.](#) Excerpted from a poem by Ayatullah Shaikh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghiṭā'a', may Allah have mercy on him.

[30.](#) al-Majlisi, Jala' al-'Uyun (in Persian).

[31.](#) This is evident from the will of the truthful lady, al-Zahra' ('a), as recorded by al-Majlisi, may Allah elevate his status. In this text, the author refers to the agony of her children at bidding her farewell. It is also recorded in Vol. 1 of al-Nawari's book Dar al-Salam.

[32.](#) From a poem by Kashif al-Ghiṭā'a', may Allah sanctify him

[33.](#) From a poem by the orator Shaikh Muslim son of the orator Shaikh Muhammad 'Ali al-Jabiri al-Najafi, may Allah Almighty have mercy on both of them.

[34.](#) Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan.

[35.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 67.

[36.](#) Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, Maqatil al-Talibiyin, p. 47 (Iranian edition). Tahthib Tarikh Ibn Asakir, Vol. 4, p. 338, where the whole incident is narrated. According to p. 254, Vol. 10, of al-Majlisi's Bihar al-Anwar (Kampani edition), where al-Isfahani's text is cited, also on p. 203, Vol. 10, of Bihar al-Anwar, where al-Mufid is quoted, and also according to Ibn Tawus and Ibn Nama, when thirst took its toll on him, al-Husayn ('a) went to the Euphrates, but he was not permitted to reach its water.

[37.](#) 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 98. Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 189. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 34.

[38.](#) Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 189. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 34. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 70.

[39.](#) Tahthib Tarikh Ibn 'Asakir, Vol. 4, p. 338. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 34. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 70.

[40.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 34. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 70.

[41.](#) This poem is published in the diwan of Sayyid Hayder al-Hilli, may Allah have mercy on him.

[42.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Al-Kamil, Vol. 4, p. 31. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 35.

[43.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 258. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, Vol. 8, p. 186.

[44.](#) Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, Maqatil al-Talibiyin, p. 37. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 258. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, Vol. 8, p. 186. It is odd to read on p. 56 of Ibn Habib's book Al-Mahbar and on p. 46 of Mis'ab Ibn al-Zubayr's book Nasab Quraish, that Fatima daughter of 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib ('a) was the wife of Muhammad Ibn Abu Sa'id Ibn 'Aqil. The author of Nasab Quraish adds saying that she had given birth to his daughter Humayda.

[45.](#) Al-Khasa'is al-Husayniyya, p. 129.

[46.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 259. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 38. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 68.

- [47.](#) Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 39. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 68.
- [48.](#) al-Dinawari, Al-Akhbar al-Tiwal, p. 255. al-Maqrizi, Khutat, Vol. 2, p. 288.
- [49.](#) Excerpted from a poem by Sayyid Hayder al-Hilli, may Allah have mercy on him.
- [50.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 35. Ibn Shahr Ashub, Manaqib, Vol. 2, p. 222.
- [51.](#) The full poem by the authority Shaikh Hadi Kashif al-Ghiṣā' is recorded on p. 56 of Al-Maqbula al-Husayniyya.
- [52.](#) al-Shabrawi, Al-Ithaf bi Hubbil-Ashraf, p. 16.
- [53.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 70.
- [54.](#) 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 110. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 35.
- [55.](#) Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 39.
- [56.](#) Excerpted from a poem by ujjatul-Islam Shaikh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghiṣā'.
- [57.](#) al-Kaf'ami, Misbah al-Mutahajjid. Al-Iqbal. Both references are quoted on p. 107 of Mazar al-Bihar, p. 107 in a chapter on his ziyarat on his birth anniversary.
- [58.](#) Sayyid Kaṣīm al-Rashti al-Ha'iri, Asrar al-Shahada, p. 423.
- [59.](#) Riyad al-Masa'ib, p. 33.
- [60.](#) Excerpted from a poem by the authority Shaikh Muhammad Taqi Al-Sahib al-Jawahir
- [61.](#) as-Saduq, Amali, p. 98, majlis 30. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, p. 37. Tazallum al-Zahra' of al-Qazwini, p. 129. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 205.
- [62.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 37.
- [63.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 37.
- [64.](#) From the ziyarat of the sacred area.
- [65.](#) From a poem by al-Hajj Hashim al-Ka'bi.
- [66.](#) al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 206. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 37.
- [67.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 259.
- [68.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 73.
- [69.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Al-Kamil, Vol. 4, p. 32. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 259 (first edition).
- [70.](#) al-Mufid, Al-Irshad.
- [71.](#) 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 100. al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 36 and following pages.
- [72.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 73.
- [73.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 38. Ibn al-Athir, Al-Kamil, Vol. 4, p. 32.
- [74.](#) Ibn Shahr Ashub, Manaqib, Vol. 2, p. 224.
- [75.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqatal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 102.
- [76.](#) From a poem by al-Sharif al-Radi, may Allah elevate his status.

---

**Source URL:**

<https://www.al-islam.org/maqatal-al-husayn-sayyid-abd-al-razzaq-al-muqarram/master-martyrs-battle-field#comment-0>