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10

1 With both hands severed by the evil blades
He fell off his horse on the banks of Euphrates
The handsome Ali Akbar advanced to the front line
The image of Muhammad, called Ahmadi Than
Muhammad the second, handsome as the morning sun
While Husein prayed: Lord accept this kurban

2 If I had more than this beloved son,
I would offer them all for sacred Islam
Greater than the sacrifice of Ibrahim's son
Ali Akbar is not blindfolded. With open eyes he fell
He accepted his fate with no fear in his heart
Ali Akbar, for a moment, stopped the enemy's attack

3 Everyone was stunned with the young approaching knight
Asking, Did the Prophet himself join the fight?
Many rose in the stirrups, many climbed camels' backs
To behold the youth riding in attack
But an evil hand thrust a sharpened lance
In the chest of handsome Akbar, who fell in the sands

4 The heart of Zaynab, the heart of Husein
Imam of the Time, Imam al-Kibletein
Rose above the limits of human domain
In patience, beholding beloved children slain
O Lord, the only hope that this life sustains
Hasten our end, O You who relieve the pains

5 With no one remaining, with everyone slain
Alone in the field, remained Husein

He rested his head on his blood encrusted spear
With clothes torn, with blood and sweat stained
While enemy snarling, advancing so near
A shriek from Zaynab to heaven was heard

6 In an instant Husein, to his sister returned
His infant son, Ali Ashgar, he observed
His mother Rubab was holding the child
For three days, not a drop of water she touched
Her shriveled breast produced no milk
The child did not even cry, it was so weak

7 The last chance, Husein gave to his foes
To show even the slightest regret and remorse
He mounted a camel, rose child in his arms:
O people! He shouted, If Husein is guilty of crime
Behold this little child, who cannot speak as yet
What is his sin? He is dying of thirst

8 For three days, he tasted no water and no milk
Would you not give a drop for the poor child's relief?
If you think I need water for my own need,
I will leave him alone so you may proceed
With charity, which Lord will not see unrewarded
So your last compassion is forever recorded

9 At his words, a commotion in their camp was seen
Some soldiers were cursing ibni Saad and Yazid
Fearing rebellion, ibni Saad commanded
A brute Hurmula, a monster stone hearted
To answer Husein. The string of his bow vibrated
A three point arrow swiftly flew to target

10 The sharp arrow penetrated through Husein's arm
It passed and pierced the tiny neck of Ashgar
The little face shivered with a gentle smile
In an instant relaxed, ascending to far
From the shaking ground, a voice was heard:
O Imam, this innocent blood I cannot bear

11 Towards the sky, sprinkled blood from Ali Ashgar's throat

The heavens thundered: O Imam, I cannot
Take it. All of my space cannot contain
Such weight. It is heavier than my entire domain
Husein touched with blood his own face
It cannot be contained in earth or heaven space

12 The child's body, he placed to his mother's arms
With his sword he buried him in the desert sands
The all evil of this world from the beginning of creation
Was present in its rage. All departed salvation
Was gone. Rebellion re-enacted at the Furat shore
The last chance gone. For men, there will be chance no more

13 After burying Ashgar with his unsheathed sword,
Husein by a strange man was approached:
I came from your daughter Fatima in Medina
To beg for Ali Ashgar to return with me
Return alone, he said. For Ali it is too late
But hasten back before, you encounter the same fate

14 The only one remaining, Husein's eldest son
Zaynul Abidin, the grace of Islam,
Lay sick in a tent, at the brink of death
You are the fourth Imam, Husein's voice was heard:
Endure in your pain. Your patience will be rewarded
You are the last of us when the rest are departed

15 To Zaynab and Qulsum, Husein gave the parting words:
You will be robbed and insulted. Your covers will be torn
You will be tortured, tormented and shamed
Do not destroy, with your tears what today we earned
Keep clean and proud, our covenant with Lord
Our deeds cannot be undone by fire and by sword

16 Surrounded by thousands, Husein exclaimed:
Have any Muslims among you remained?
Silence in response. Not a single sound
Not a whisper, not a voice. In the silence profound
One voice responded: Father, here I am
Zaynul Abidin whispered, Husein's oldest son

17 Burning with high fever, leaning on a cane
His voice was joined with those from unseen:
Labbayk. Everyone heard from on high
O son of the Prophet, we hear your reply
While Husein motioned to his son to retreat:
You are to continue after my defeat

18 Once again, for the last time, on his steed
His face towards heaven, with his last tawhid
Too tired to dismount, to Zuljannah he said:
Though you are thirsty like me, kneel. The horse obeyed
Kneeling in the sand, he gently lowered his head
To the last asr prayer Imam Husein stepped

19 The spears and swords raised at him at once
Pointed and lifted, were unable to strike
The advancing horsemen retreated in fear
At prayer he whispered, which everyone heard:
Lord, forgive these sinners in their fall and shame
I submit to your will, O Creator supreme

20 A thousand gold coins offered for his head
Not a single soldier was willing to collect
Their swords hesitated, suspended in the air
Till with dark cloud surrounded, advanced cursed Shimir
Not allowing Husein to finish his prayer, he struck
Allahu Akbar, the severed head spoke

21 As if not with the blood, they were satisfied
The hordes of demons were ordered to ride
Over the bodies of martyrs. They set the camp to flames
The remains looted, at Karbala plains
The ropes around bare-headed ladies, they tied
Zaynul Abidin, they bound in chains

22 From Karbala to Kufa, from Kufa to Sham
My words cannot describe the torture and pain
Paraded through Kufa, over crowded streets
They were dragged to Sham, to awaiting Yazid
In gold and silk he sat, drunk with the wine and power
But from his worst pain, he never will recover

23 Severed heads of seventy-two Shaheeds
Were carried on lances through Damascus streets
The head of Husein was shining through the night
Carried by Khouli, who stopped to visit his wife
They heard from Husein's lips the chapter of the Cave
What wonderful signs to mankind you gave!

24 What followed, my words can never describe
The shame of the streets of Damascus, its every bazaar
The ladies in shame, covered their faces with hair
Children agonizing before the heads on the spear
At last confined in the dreaded Shami Zindan
The prisons of Yazid, eternal shame of Sham

25 In the dark of night, Yazid woke up in fear:
What crying and wailing, he asked, do I hear?
In this crowded city, among all noise, one single tear
Shakes me up with horror that I cannot bear
His guards responded: It must be from the pains
Of ladies and children imprisoned in chains

26 Yazid was alarmed. A girl three and a half years old
Is crying for her father in the dark and cold
Though far from your palace, she is clearly heard
Sukainah bint Husein, in your dream appeared
She disturbs your sleep, O our King Yazid
During that very same night, she died as shaheed

27 The pain of the child did not appease the brute
The feast continued in Sham. String and drum and flute
And festive robes paraded in the streets
While the house of the Prophet and the family deceased
With the rest perishing in dungeons of accursed Sham
But tyrants also knew, there is no escape for them

28 For many days, the captives endured humiliation
Of hunger, dirt, abuse, the utter deprivation
No benefit of light, of water, of a night rest
With scorpion and vermin, their only nightly guests
After many months, some to Karbala returned
And buried whatever of shaheeds remained

29 The centuries have passed as the wave of stormy seas
Palaces covered with dust. No mighty monarchies
The spiders and bats are hanging in the empty banquet halls
Swords and crowns are falling and forever will fall
But the light that shines from every martyr's head
They will never perish, their light will never end

30 Where are you all today? O kingdoms of the dust
Your wealth and shining swords all coated with the rust
Where are your golden crowns? Where are your precious stones?
In the snake pits descend your decaying bones
The glory of this world remains worthless dust
While the blood of Husein shines over galaxies and stars

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