

Bibi Zainab (AS)

Wiladat: 5th Jamadi ul Awal (Sunday 11th May 2008)

Titles: Al Aqilah (gentlewoman), Al Alimah (knowledgeable),

Abidatul Ale-Ali(worshipper of Ali's household),

Al Kamilah (the perfect), Al Fadhilah (the virtuous), Al Siddiqah al Sughra (the junior veracious lady),

Umm al Masaib (mother of misfortunes)

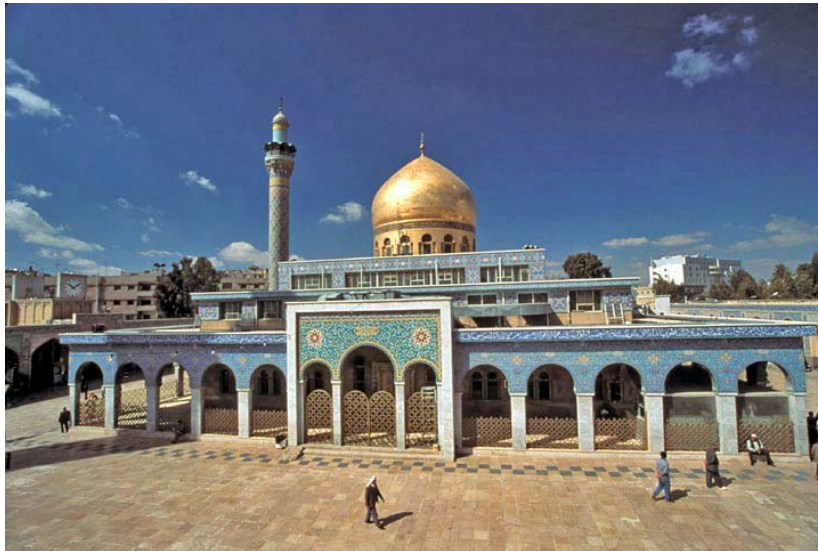
Birth: 5th Jamdi ul Awal 5 A.H. in Medina

Death: 15th Rajab 62 A.H.

Buried: Damascus, Syria

“You are the one who knows without being taught.”

(Imam Zainul Abideen (AS) commended about the intellect and accuracy of Bibi Zainab's knowledge)



Five years after Hijrah, the Holy Prophet's (SAW) daughter, Bibi Fatema (AS), gave birth to a baby girl. The Ahl ul Bayt and the Prophet's companions received the news of the birth with gladness. The child born was a lady of great eminence, the future leader of the women and a role model for mankind. It is also narrated that the Prophet (SAW) foretold the events of her life and the role she would play in saving Islam. Bibi Fatema and Imam Ali asked the Holy Prophet (SAW) to name the child to which the Prophet answered:

“I will not precede my Lord in such a matter”

He then declared that the child be named '**Zainab**', meaning '***the embellishment of the father***'.

The household of the Holy Prophet was sent by Allah (SWT) as a pure guide for mankind. Bibi Zainab who was one of the pioneers of the greatest revolutions of Islam perfectly reflected the upbringing in this household. Her surroundings emulated the light of knowledge to all parts of the globe. Bibi Zainab's early education was under the guardianship of the Holy Prophet (SAW). When he passed away, Bibi Zainab was only five years of age. She then turned to the teachings of her mother and father.

Bibi Zainab married her first cousin, Abdullah ibn Ja'far Tayyar who was the noblest man of the Hashemites and one of the most generous men of the Arabs. They had five children, four sons and one daughter; Awn, Ali al-Zaynabi, Muhammad, Abbas, and Ummu-Kulthum.

Bibi Zainab was highly knowledgeable and was free from worldly attachment. This world was seen by her as a place of travel where only that which was necessary for the journey to the hereafter should be taken. She was known for her generosity and always preferred others over herself. She lived a humble life, despite the wealth of her husband. Bibi Zainab was totally devoted to Allah, and it is recorded that she never missed any of her *wajib* and *nafilah* prayers even during the events of Kerbala.

Bibi Zainab was renowned for her leadership through her conduct. After the death of her grandmother and mother, she became the leader of the women. She used to hold regular classes in Medina for the women, in which she used to very concisely convey her knowledge. Her subjects included, Islamic Law and Tafsir of the Qur'an. Women used to gather to learn from her teachings and emulate her manners and morals. She delivered her classes in an eloquent manner. Her eloquence in speech and presentation was acquired from her father, Imam Ali (AS). Bibi Zainab also became known as **Fasihah** (skilfully fluent) and **Balighah** (intensely eloquent).

When Imam Ali moved to Kufa, Bibi Zainab (A.S) too moved there and continued holding classes for the women folk there. Once in Kufa, Bibi Zainab was delivering a lecture in which she was presenting the exegesis of the phrase

“Allah (SWT) hears and accepts the praise of one who praises him”

Imam Husayn (AS) passed by and upon hearing the voice of his sister; he stopped to listen to what she was saying. Although he was an Imam, he honoured his sister by this act, but not only that, it also goes to show the level of intellect that Bibi Zainab had acquired.

Bibi Zainab's intellect was seen to be extremely vivid and the capacity to which she absorbed information can only be described as outstanding. To her merit lies the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an, the sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) pertaining to Islamic ethics, as well as rules of education. Abdullah ibn Abbas has reported that Bibi Zainab narrated that Imam Ali (AS) was once teaching his daughter how to count and he asked her, “Say: “one” and Bibi Zainab replied “One”. He then asked her “Say: two”. To this she kept silent and did not reply. Upon inquiry by her father about her silence, Bibi Zainab said, “A tongue which pronounces ‘one’ cannot say ‘two’”. Her father hugged and kissed her as a gesture in acknowledgment of her belief in *Tawhid* of Allah (SWT).

Bibi Zainab died in the year 62 AH. Today there are two shrines, both of which claims Bibi Zainab is buried therein, one in Syria and the other in Egypt but the grave in Damascus appears to be more popular.