

The Right Side of History



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Words of Wisdom

Zainab al-Kubra (pbuh) showed the great spiritual and intellectual capacities of women to all of history and the entire world. This is very important. Despite the foolish wishes of the people who humiliated women at that time and those who are doing so in our own time, Zainab al-Kubra was able to show the high status of women and the great psychological, mental and spiritual strength of women. That great personage, Zainab al-Kubra (pbuh), showed two points. The first point is that women can be a vast ocean of patience and endurance, and the second point is that women can be a peak of wisdom and prudence. Zainab al-Kubra (pbuh) demonstrated these in practice, and not just to those who were living in Kufah and Shaam [the Levant]. She showed this to history and all of humanity.

From Martyr Khamenei's speech on Dec. 12, 2021



Word for Word

The patience and endurance that Zainab al-Kubra showed and the tragedies she faced cannot be described at all. Firstly, she showed great endurance in the face of the martyrdoms. In about half a day or less than a day, 18 of her dear ones and relatives were martyred. One of these was her noble brother – God's Proof on earth, the Master of Martyrs (peace be upon him). These people were martyred in front of her eyes. Her two children were martyred as well, but she endured all of these. A mountain would collapse in the face of such tragedies, but Zainab al-Kubra was able to show patience and endurance and to carry out her subsequent duties ... She also showed patience in the face of insults. A lady who had lived with dignity from the time she was born and one whom everyone had held in high regard from her childhood to her adulthood was insulted by the thugs and ruffians in the Umayyad army, but she was patient and did not break down.

She also showed her patience when faced with the huge responsibility of gathering together the orphaned children and the mourning women. This was a great task. She was able to bring together and take care of tens of women and children who were mourning and injured during that difficult journey. These were some of the tasks carried out by Zainab. She showed great endurance. Indeed, Zainab al-Kubra was an ocean of patience and tranquility. She showed that women can reach this point and this great level of inner, spiritual strength ... As for her wisdom, intelligent behavior and mental power, her behavior during her captivity was truly amazing.

She was also a manifestation of resistance and mental strength in the face of those proud, arrogant rulers. When Ibn Ziad began to address her with derisory remarks in Kufa and said, "Did you see what happened. Did you see that you have failed?" she replied, "I did not see anything but beauty."¹ This was a slap across the face of that arrogant, malicious man, Ibn Ziad. When Yazid made those

nonsensical, ludicrous remarks, Lady Zainab replied in an interesting way. She made this well-known, truly historic statement, "Use every trick that you know and every deception you can, but by God, you will not be able to erase our memory."² In today's language, this means, "Do whatever awful thing you can, but you cannot make people forget about us." Whom does she say this to? To the arrogant, proud, tyrannical, bloodthirsty Yazid. This shows the inner strength of a woman. What strength is this! What greatness is this! These qualities are a sign of wisdom and prudence.

Lady Zainab showed the spiritual and intellectual capacities of women with her behavior and her statements. She spoke the way the Commander of the Faithful (pbuh) did. She stood firmly the way the Holy Prophet did when facing the unbelievers. This is a woman's capacity.

Another important point about the life of this great woman, which is another sign of her prudence, is that this noble lady launched the jihad (struggle) of clarification and narration [of truth]. She did not give the enemy's narrative the opportunity to overcome. She acted in such a way to make her own narrative the dominant one among public opinion. The narrative provided by Zainab al-Kubra about the event of Ashura has remained in history until today. But at that time too, it influenced the people in Shaam [the Levant] and in Kufa. Its effects were unending throughout the Umayyad Dynasty and it actually led to that dynasty's overthrow.

From Martyr Khamenei's speech on Dec. 12, 2021

1. *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 45, p. 116

2. *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 45, p. 135



Memorable Frame



Martyr Khamenei visiting the shrine of Lady Zainab (pbuh) in Sept. 1984

"O you who have faith! Be patient, stand firm, and close [your] ranks, and be wary of Allah so that you may be felicitous." (Quran, 3:200)

The present image depicts an allegiance—an allegiance to the path of pure resistance and jihad. From the very beginning of his political struggle against the forces of tyranny and oppression, our martyred Leader, Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei, chose the path of resistance and steadfastness for the sake of God and His religion. Following such a sacred and holy path is impossible without an inspiration or a role model. And who could be a better source of inspiration than Lady Zainab al-Kubra (pbuh), the true embodiment and example of Quranic resistance, on this journey?

Following the Quranic model exemplified by Lady Zainab (pbuh), he remained patient and endured all the hardships and difficulties of this path with unwavering strength. The more difficult the path became, the more resolute and steadfast his patience and determination grew. He stood firm and fought back against the forces of evil that

sought to destroy the values of Islam and annihilate the ideals of the Islamic Revolution. In doing so, he strengthened the unity and cohesion of the Islamic system and kept the enemies of Islamic Iran at bay for decades.

Ultimately, just as in the case of Lady Zainab (pbuh), the divine promise was fulfilled for him as well. After years of struggle and relentless jihad, he attained martyrdom—the highest rank and greatest honor to which a human being can aspire.

"Our movement should be in line with the movement of Lady Zainab (pbuh). Our efforts should be focused on bringing dignity for Islam, the Islamic community and the entire humanity."¹

1. Martyr Khamenei, Nov. 20, 2013



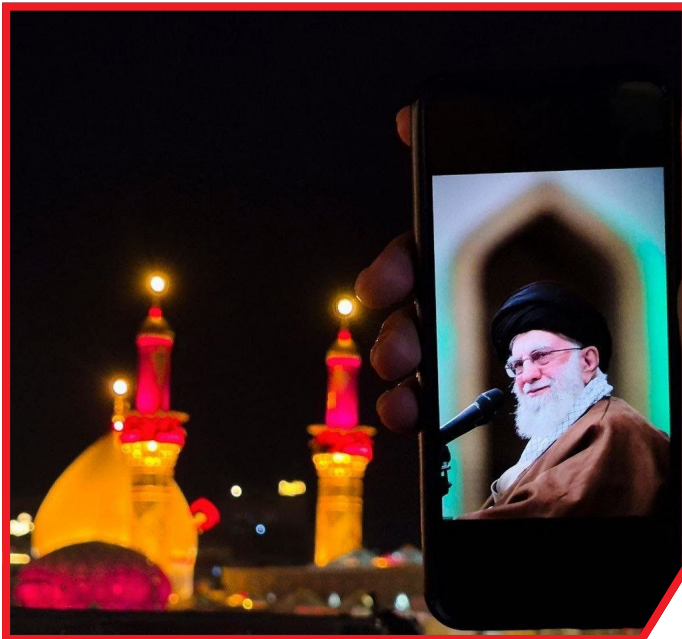
The People Rise Up

Should any event befall this country, Almighty God will raise these people to confront it. The people will be the ones who will stop it.

Martyr Khamenei

Feb. 1, 2026





Arbaeen pilgrims performing their pilgrimag
on behalf of Iran's magnanimous leaders



Choose the Right Side of History



Mourners participating in an Arbaeen procession in the Kargil region of Indian Administered Kashmir.





Opinion

The real empowered woman, Lady Zainab (pbuh)

Zahrasadat Sheykholeslam, researcher in the field of Women's Studies

The world is currently witnessing heart-wrenching images of the war in Gaza. These images depict injured and vulnerable children, grieving men carrying the bodies of their loved ones, and mothers feeling the pain of saying their final goodbyes to their shrouded newborns. The depth of the suffering in Gaza is overwhelming, and the unwavering patience and resilience of its people is truly remarkable. As a woman and a mother, my heart goes out to the women of Gaza. Witnessing the strength and determination of them, who continue to embrace life during the war, nourish their families, care for their little ones, and encourage others to stay strong, is incredibly moving. Honestly, while Western media often portrays Muslim women as disempowered, dependent, and oppressed, the images of women from Gaza tell a different story to the world. People around the world have witnessed the resilience of Palestinian women. Their dignity, modesty, endurance, wisdom, and strength have caused many Western women to re-evaluate their own societal norms and values. Many non-Muslim women have found inspiration in these real-life superwomen, challenging their preconceived notions about Muslim women. They have begun to question what gives those women the strength to endure the toughest situations in the recent history and still be grateful to God. They wonder what kind of faith can empower women and bring up their inner values like this. Unlike Western audiences,

the resilience and strength of women in Gaza are familiar to me as a Muslim, as we have heard about and witnessed many similar stories throughout our history.

The heroic women in Gaza surely had role models to look up to. Throughout the history of Islam, there are remarkable female figures who serve as role models not only for women, but for all people. These women exemplify feminine strength within Islamic beliefs and values. Lady Zainab, for instance, the granddaughter of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon them), is a timeless role model who showcased the intellectual and spiritual capacities of a woman beyond expectation. "Lady Zainab represents a multi-dimensional personality: she is wise and well-educated with great knowledge, a distinguished person, anyone who meets her, feels humble before the greatness of her wise soul and her insight." She was known as the Agheelah of Bani Hashim, meaning she had the highest level of wisdom in her tribe, Bani Hashim, the most prominent tribe at the time. Her character and wisdom have established her as an exceptional role model to admire. Muslims reflect on her values, traditions, and the essence of her spirit, acknowledging and embracing her influence. Also, they follow her guidance and share her teachings with others, ensuring her legacy continues to inspire.

If I want to sum up her life and impressions, she consistently did the right thing at the right time and in the right place. She was dedicated to serve God and her actions were always driven by duty rather than personal desires or a need for attention. Throughout her

life, she played multiple roles in accordance with the social and political conditions of the time to educate, promote, and support the teachings of pure Islam. For instance, before the martyrdom of his brother, Imam Hussain (pbuh), she primarily took on the role of a teacher, educating the people of her time in the interpretation of the Quran, jurisprudence, and Hadith. It should be noted that in all the topics that Lady Zainab (pbuh) taught, she possessed the highest level of knowledge. She was known as "the unschooled scholar and understanding without being explained". However, after the martyrdom of her brother Imam Hussain, she immediately transformed into a political leader and a social pioneer who completely determined the course of historical events.

In terms of her political engagement, Lady Zainab (pbuh) played a significant historical role in saving the religion of Islam from deviation and destruction. After the tragic battle and martyrdom of Imam Hussain (pbuh) and his companions, including seventeen dear members of Lady Zainab's family, the noble women and children of the Hussain's family and his companions were taken captive by Yazid's army. Despite her injuries and grief, Lady Zainab took care of these women and children like a kind mother and devoted nurse. Yazid, the bloodthirsty tyrant of the time, brought them to his place and subjected them to mental and physical torture. When the captives and Yazid ibn Muawiyah met in his court, he sought to create his narrative and portray Imam Hussain's army as defeated. However, responding to him, Lady Zainab (pbuh) delivered such a sermon that completely obliterated Yazid's narrative of the event and permanently established her own account in history. Lady Zainab (pbuh) delivered a sermon that was both enlightening and highly eloquent. Her speech clarified the truth, which Yazid tried to distort. However, it was not

just the content of this sermon that made Lady Zainab's narrative historical; rather, her speech was so eloquent and beautiful that the audience were entirely captivated by her words. Furthermore, despite her captivity and all the hardships she had endured, she delivered her sermon with such strength and magnificence that the people felt that Lady Zainab is the one in power and Yazid was her captive. Finally, with that single sermon, Lady Zainab (pbuh) affected everyone to the extent that after her speech, Yazid completely denied the massacre of Imam Hussain and his companions (peace be upon them) and shifted the blame totally onto another person, namely Ibn Ziyad. Also, she had a speech in the city of Kufa for the people. However, she adapted a different tone when speaking to them; a very critical tone that touched the people deeply in their hearts.

When the group of captives was paraded among the people of Kufa, who initially pledged their support for Imam Hussain but later withdrew their support due to Yazid's threats and intimidation, Lady Zainab (pbuh) delivered an affecting sermon. Her words made the people deeply regretful and moved by the truth, causing them to weep and express their remorse by biting their fingers. It is believed that Lady Zainab's sermon and her enlightenment played a significant role in the movement of the "Tawwabin" (those who repented and sought revenge for Hussain and his companions). Additionally, Lady Zainab and Imam Ali ibn Hussain (peace be upon them) established a tradition to commemorate the name of Hussain and his companions through the Arbaeen Walk. There is a narration that Lady Zainab and Imam Sajjad (peace be upon them) made a pilgrimage to Karbala forty days after the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (pbuh). This tradition continues to this day, and every year Muslims from all over the world gather in Iraq to walk to Karbala and

honor the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions and to keep his goals alive. The Arbäeen pilgrimage is the largest annual gathering of human being throughout the history, however, her great legacy does not end there.

Blessed with her Islamic upbringing, she has a multi-dimensional personality. Of course, her comprehensive character cannot be fully described here. However, one important point that I would like to mention about her is the significant role played by her feminine traits in her life. She couldn't bear all those extraordinary hardships if it was not for her feminine capacities. In terms of feminine power, Martyr Khamenei had stated: "This is the magnificence of a woman who is a

fusion of humane affection - in no man, we can detect such enthusiastic affection - and the sedateness of personality, endurance of the soul, that can overcome all the troubling hardships; and, on blistering flames, it can bravely step and move forward." Just like women of Gaza, they demonstrated that "the Muslim woman's personality becomes so magnificent and glorious, through the blessing of faith and reliance on Divine mercy, that the greatest incidents appear trivial and insignificant to her." To summarize, Lady Zainab taught us that in order to make historical changes, we do not need to be "equal" to men, but simply have to embrace our God-given feminine traits and be faithful, strong, and aware women.



A Moment with Caravan of Martyrs

A Beacon of Guidance: The life and legacy of Sayyida Bint al-Huda Sadr

Zahra Shafei, cultural researcher

Sayyida Āmina Haidar al-Sadr, who later adopted the pen name Bint al-Huda, was born in Muharram 1357 AH (1938) in Kadhimiya, Baghdad. She emerged as one of the most prominent figures in the Islamic world, especially in Iraq, during the mid-20th century. Her life and work stand as a rare example of dedication and struggle in the pursuit of religious education and the promotion of Islamic values amid a turbulent social climate. As the sister of the renowned scholar and martyr, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, she played an unparalleled role in shaping the intellectual and spiritual vision of Muslim women in her time. Through her writings and educational efforts, she became a guiding light and a source of inspiration for generations of women who take steps along the path of the uprising of scholars and martyrs.

Early Life and Education

Sayyida Āmina al-Sadr was born into a distinguished family of scholars and learned individuals. Her father, Sayyid Haidar, was a high-ranking Shia authority, and her mother was the daughter of Shaykh 'Abd al-Hussain Āl Yāsīn, one of the leading scholars of his time. Just six months after her birth, the death of her father placed the family in financial hardship. At the age of five, she began learning to read and write from her mother, and later, under the guidance



Martyr
Sayyida Bint
al-Huda Sadr

of her two brothers—Sayyid Isma'il and Sayyid Muhammad Baqir — she studied grammar, logic, jurisprudence, and principles of Islamic law. With remarkable intelligence and unmatched aptitude, she entered the seminary of Najaf at the age of eleven, accompanying her brothers in pursuit of knowledge.

Among her siblings, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir — four years her senior — would become her closest mentor, guide, and companion. Sayyida Āmina continued her advanced studies under his supervision until the end of her life, ultimately reaching the level of ijtihād (independent legal reasoning). During the difficult days of orphanhood and poverty, she and her brothers spent their limited resources on second-hand books, selling them afterward to buy new ones.

It was this commitment to learning and acquiring knowledge that shaped Aminah's scholarly character and ignited her drive to spread awareness.¹

Contributions to Islamic Media and Literature

One of Bint al-Huda's most remarkable contributions was her pioneering role in Islamic literature and media. Her involvement in this field began at the age of twelve, when she launched a religious and cultural magazine for Muslim women called "Jāmi'ah" (University). Perceptively recognizing the urgent need for a female voice in religious discourse — especially at a time when Western ideologies sought to erode Islamic values — she took upon herself the vital mission of raising awareness among Muslim women and girls.

Writing under the pen name "Bint al-Huda" — a reflection of her humility and lack of interest in personal fame — she published numerous articles in renowned Islamic magazines like "Aḍwā" (Lights) and "Al-Īmān" (Faith). These platforms became outlets for her views on social, cultural, and religious issues facing Muslim women. Her writings were insightful, profound, and firmly rooted in Islamic values. In one of her essays, she urged young Muslim women to resist the seductive pull of Western moral decline and to remain steadfast in their faith. She emphasized the importance of education and believed that both men and women shared the responsibility of advocating Islam. Covering topics ranging from hijab to marriage, she offered practical solutions based on Islamic teachings, teaching women how to confront modern challenges without compromising

their beliefs. Recognizing the importance of literature, poetry, and storytelling — and the lack of appropriate reading material for young audiences vulnerable to anti-Islamic propaganda — she authored several books and short stories. These works vividly depicted ethical dilemmas, social issues, and the pains of the oppressed. Like her brother's writings, Bint al-Huda's books were banned under the Ba'ath regime, and possessing or reading them carried severe punishment.

Role in Women's Education and Community Engagement

Bint al-Huda dedicated herself to enriching Islamic culture by educating Muslim women and girls. She managed al-Zahrā' schools in the cities of Kadhimiya and Najaf. These schools adhered to the official curriculum while incorporating additional classes focused on Islamic studies, teaching students the principles of Islam and explaining Shia thought. Her tireless efforts turned these institutions into academically distinguished centers, widely recognized for their success in national exams and admired as popular places of learning.

One of her other heroic endeavors was organizing Majālis Ḥussainiyyah (commemorative gatherings for Imam Hussain). Recognizing their potential as powerful spaces for religious education and social interaction, she restructured these events to align more closely with Islamic principles. Rather than being limited to mourning recitations, her gatherings featured speeches, group discussions, and interactive sessions aimed at enhancing the religious and social insight of attendees. This innovative approach attracted women from all walks of life. In all her gatherings, Bint

al-Huda would stress the value of thought and reflection. In one such session, when the hostess was busy serving elaborate refreshments, Bint al-Huda — true to her gentle and composed demeanor — smiled and softly remarked: "I wish the time you spent preparing sandwiches, cakes, and tea had been used just to make some juice and sweets — and you'd have spent the rest preparing a meaningful topic to share with the guests. That way, no one's time would be wasted, and they'd leave with something valuable in their hands and hearts."² Imam Khamenei described the character and the scholarly and jihadi movement of Martyr Bint al-Huda al-Sadr, saying, "In our era, there was a courageous, scholarly, intellectual, artistic young woman by the name of Ms. Bint al-Huda — the sister of Martyr Sadr — was able to influence history. She was able to play a role in the oppressed country of Iraq. Of course, she was martyred too. The greatness of a woman like Bint al-Huda is no less than any of the courageous, great men. Her movement was a feminine movement, while the movement of those men was a masculine movement. But both movements are evolutionary and indicative of a greatness of character and the brilliance of the human essence and nature. Women like this should be educated and nurtured" (Oct. 22, 1997).

Leadership and Legacy

During the suffocating oppression of the Ba'ath regime — when spies roamed near her and her brother's home — Bint al-Huda displayed extraordinary strength as a leader and educator. With unwavering conviction, she continued along the path inherited from her noble ancestors — an ideal to which she had devoted her entire youth. The impact of her illuminating words spread far beyond her immediate circle. Many professional women and students gained insight and awareness from her teachings, learning from her to preserve their dignity and strive for empowerment. In the darkest of times, she became a source of comfort and inspiration for oppressed women under tyranny. Her warm smile, her Zainab-like patience, and her fearless composure in the face of adversity struck fear into the hearts of the enemy. This devoted jurist and activist, along with her revered brother Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, was arrested by the Ba'ath regime's forces after eleven months of intense siege on their household. After days of brutal torture, they were both martyred.³

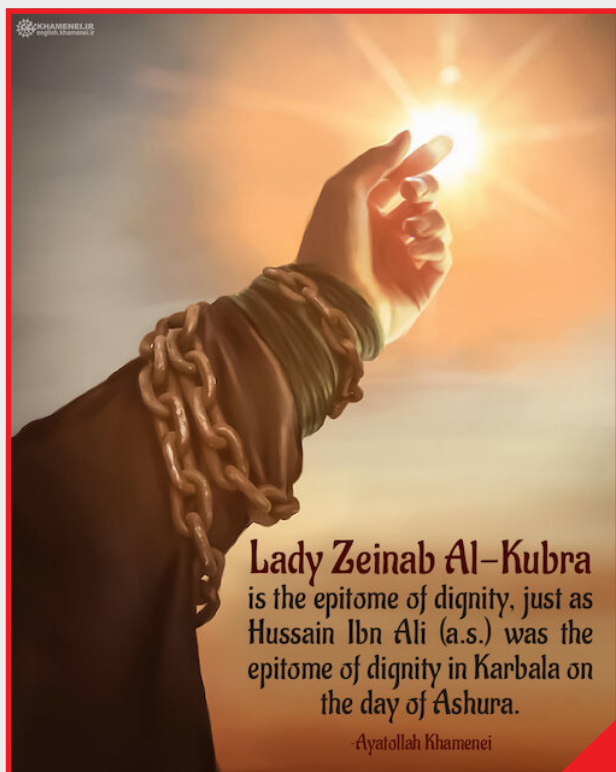
1. *A Daughter of the Lineage of Guidance* by Fariba Anisi

2. "Bint al-Huda as I Saw Her," *Aman Magazine*, Farvardin & Ordibehesht 1390 (April–May 2011), Issue No. 29.

3. <https://al-islam.org/tribute-sadr-martyrs>



Narrating the Art



The hand of truth may sometimes appear to be in chains, but patience is the way of the Imams of truth. Whether it be the Commander of the Faithful, who remained a thorn in the eye of a treacherous time, or his daughter, the pride of the Banu Hashim, who, at the height of the most devastating calamities one could witness in a single half-day, did not so much as furrow her brow. She patiently tended to the widowed women and the orphaned children, shielding them from the most savage. Indeed, this could only come from the daughter of Ali (pbut).

On the day when the purest souls were brought into the most wretched of places, Lady Zainab did not break. She whispered "Ya Fatimah," seeking her intercession, and clasped in her hand the yellow turban that her father, the Conqueror of Khaybar, used to wear in battles, and then delivered a sermon like the Honorer of the Faithful, Imam Hasan, shaking the very foundations of that court. For Imam Hussain, who was the Fifth of the nobles under the Cloak, she became all the other four, and she protected the next Imam, Imam Sajjad (pbut), with everything she had. Indeed, Lady Zainab is everything a person could strive to become — a woman who reached the peak of humanity and became a model for both men and women.



We Learned From Him

I learned from him the manners of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

I learned from him the courage of Ali (a.s.).

I learned from him the patience of Sayyeda Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.).

I learned from him the eloquence of Imam Hasan (a.s.).

I learned from him the sacrifice of Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.).

I learned my religion and faith from him,

I learned from him what it truly means to be a Muslim

I learned from him what it truly means to be a follower of Ahlulbayt a.s

All the limited and small knowledge that I have, all of it, i learned through him.

I, the deprived son who never had the honor
of meeting his spiritual father—Sayyed S.N. Abbas.



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