

(Ali Al-Akbar (p), Look-alike of the Prophet (p))

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The Hashemite Prince Hazrat Ali Al-Akbar (p), son of Imam Al-Hussain (p) and Hazrat Umm-e-Layla (p), born on 11 Shaban, possessed so much remarkable resemblance to the holy prophet Hazrat Muhammad (p) that the Chief of Martyrs and Leader of the Youths of Paradise Al-Imam Al-Hussain (p) was often heard to say "Whenever I desire to see the holy prophet (p) I look at him."

In looks, in voice, in mannerism, in gait and in every way, Ali Al-Akbar (p) resembled the Seal of Prophets Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (p). The resemblance was so marked that people from far and wide were coming to see him, to be reminded of the Prophet (p) whom they were missing so much. Those who had not had the good fortune to see the Prophet (p) were told by their elders that Ali Al-Akbar (p) was the very image of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (p). His handsome looks were matched by his handsome deeds. His nobility of character, his sense of duty, his generosity, his chivalry, his geniality, his love of justice and fairplay had endeared him to every soul.

18-year-old Ali Al-Akbar (p) had been taught fencing and archery by Inheritor of Haidari Valor Hazrat Al-Abbas (p).

In the battle of Karbala in 61 AH, Ali Al-Akbar (p) went over to his father Al-Imam Al-Hussain (p) to ask his permission to go out into that gory arena from which no person from his camp had returned. Hussain (p) looked at his face; it would be more correct to say that for a couple of minutes his stare was fixed on that face which he loved so much, which reminded him every time of his grandfather (p) whom he resembled every inch. He tried to say something but his voice failed him. With considerable effort he whispered with sad eyes: Akbar, I wish you had become a father, then you would have known what I am experiencing at this moment. My son, how can a father ask his son to go, when he knows that the parting would be for ever! But Akbar, the call of duty makes me helpless in this matter. Go to your mother (p), and to your aunt Zainab (p) who has brought you up from childhood and loved you and cared for you more than for her own sons, and seek their permission.

Hazrat Zainab Bint-e-Ali (p) said:

Oh God, can it be true that Akbar has come to bid me and his mother the last farewell! Akbar! Do not say that you are ready for the last journey. So long as my sons Aun and Muhammad are there, it is impossible for me to let you go.

Hazrat Ali- Al-Akbar said:

My aunt, for all my father's kinsmen the inevitable hour has come. I implore you, by the love you bear for your brother, to let me go so that it may not be said that he spared me till all his brothers and nephews were killed. Abbas, my uncle, is Commander of our army. The others are all younger than me. When death is a certainty, let me die first so that I can quench my thirst at the heavenly spring of Kausar at the hands of my grandfather.

After getting permission from Hazrat Zainab (p) and Hazrat Umm-e-Layla (p), Hazrat Ali Al-Akbar (p) said to her aunt Zainab (p):

My aunt, I am leaving my mother to your care. I know, from your childhood, your mother Fatima (p) prepared you for the soul-stirring events of today and what is to come hereafter. My mother will not be able to bear the blows and calamities that are to befall her, unless you lend her your courage. I implore you by the infinite love you bear for me to show the fortitude that you are capable of, so that your patience may sustain my mother when she sees my dead body brought into the camp's morgue. I entrust her to your care because there will be none to solace her and look after her in the years of dismay and despondency that lie ahead of her.

Sending Ali Al-Akbar to the battlefield, Imam Hussain (p) raised his hands and said:

"O lord be a witness against this people that a youth is leaving who was resembling the Holy Prophet (p) most ... whenever I was desirous of seeing the holy prophet (p) I looked at him ..."

In the battlefield, he was addressing the forces of Amr Ibne Saad with an eloquence which he had inherited from his Grandfather Ali Al-Murtaza (p) and the Prophet Muhammad Al-Mustafa (p). He was telling them that Hussain, his father, had done them no harm. He was explaining to them that by shedding the blood of Hussain (p) and his kinsmen, they would be incurring the wrath of God and displeasure of the Prophet (p) who had loved Hussain (p) more than any other person. He was exhorting them not to smear their hands with the blood of a person so holy, so God-fearing and so righteous.

His words cast a spell on the army of the opponents. The older ones from amongst them were blinking their eyes in amazement and wondering whether the Prophet (p) had descended from the Heavens to warn them against the shedding of Hussain (p)'s blood. What a resemblance there was with the Prophet (p), in face, features and even mannerism! Even the voice was of Muhammad (p)! But on second thoughts, they realized that this was Ali Al-Akbar, the 18 year old son of Hussain (p), about whose close resemblance with the Prophet (p) people were .talking so much