

## Who's Who?

### **Abbas ibn Ali**

The son of Ali and Umm al-Banin, born 647, killed in the battle at Karbala. He was the half-brother of Hussain, a noted warrior, and the standard-bearer of Hussain's army. He was cut down in an attempt to bring water to the children of Hussain's camp.

### **Abd Allah ibn Umayr**

A citizen of Kufa who came out with his wife and mother to join the cause of Hussain at Karbala, where he was killed. His wife ran to cradle his dead body and was also killed; the only woman martyr that day.

### **Abdullah Ali Asghar**

The infant son of Hussain and Rubab, born in 680CE and killed during the battle at Karbala.

### **Abdullah ibn Abbas**

A cousin of Hussain, the son of Abbas, the uncle of Muhammad. He was renowned as an early scholar of the interpretation of the Qur'an (619-687CE). He sought to dissuade Hussain from the journey through the desert towards Iraq.

**Abraham** (see Ibrahim below)

### **Ahl al-Bayt**

Literally, the People of the Household, or usually, the Family of the Prophet. This is understood to comprise Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Hussain. It is sometimes widened to include the descendants of Hussain, especially the Imams. Sometimes the term can be found to include reference to Muhammad's wives after the death of Khadija.

### **Ali Akbar**

The eldest son of Hussain with his second wife Layla. Born in 653CE and killed in the battle at Karbala.

### **Ali ibn Abi Talib**

The cousin of Muhammad, who married Fatima and was the father of Hasan and Hussain. Born in Mecca in 601 and died in Kufa in 661CE.

**Ali ibn Hussain** (see Zayn al-Abidin)

### **Banu Asad**

The tribe who agreed with Hussain to bury his body and those of his family and companions after the battle at Karbala.

### **Fatima**

The daughter of Muhammad and Khadija, who married Ali and was the mother of Hasan and Hussain. She died in 632CE but the location of her grave has not been revealed.

### **Fatima al-Sughra**

The daughter of Hussain and his fourth wife Umm Ishaq, born in 671CE.

### **Fatima bint Asad**

The mother of Ali, the first Imam, who was buried in the cemetery of al-Baqi in Medina and alongside whose grave was buried Hasan, the son of Ali.

### **Hani ibn Urwa**

A clan chief who stood by Hussain and Muslim ibn Aqil in Kufa. He was executed by Ibn Ziyad in 680CE.

### **Hasan**

The first son of Ali and Fatima, born in 625 and died in 669CE.

### **Hurr**

The commander of the soldiers sent out to shadow Hussain and his companions in the desert. A respected army officer and pious man. He rebelled to join Hussain at Karbala and died as a martyr on the Day of Ashura 680CE.

### **Hussain** (other common spellings: Husayn, Hussein)

The second son of Ali and Fatima, born in 626 and killed in the battle at Karbala in 680CE.

### **Ibn Khaldun**

Renowned Sunni sociologist and historian (1332-1406).

### **Ibn Ziyad**

The governor of Basra sent to become governor of Kufa. A tool in the hands of Yazid, he gave orders to the army that killed Hussain at Karbala.

### **Ibrahim** (Biblical name: Abraham)

An earlier prophet sent by God to establish the religion of God on earth. The father of the prophets Isma'il and Isaac. His first wife was Sarah, with whom he had his second son Isaac, and his second wife was Hajar, with whom he had his firstborn son Isma'il, with whom he re-built the ka'bah in Mecca.

### **Ishmael** (see Isma'il below)

### **Isma'il** (Biblical name: Ishmael)

A prophet of God sent to establish the religion of God on the earth. He was the son of Prophet Ibrahim (above).

### **Ja'far**

The name of a son of Hussain, whose mother came from the tribe of Qada'ah but whose name has not been recorded. Both Ja'far and his mother died before the time of the battle at Karbala.

### **Jesus** (Arabic: 'Isa)

A prophet of God sent to the People of Israel, born of the virgin Mary by divine decree, taken up alive at the end of his earthly life and awaiting the command of God to return to the earth in the end times of the world when, together with the Mahdi, he will purge the earth of sin and error before his death and burial in Medina. This will be the trigger for the end of all life on earth and the resurrection of all human beings for judgement before God.

### **Junada al-Ansari**

A companion of Hussain, who was killed at the battle at Karbala. His eleven-year-old son, Umar, at his mother's prompting, also came forward to ask permission to fight, which was eventually granted and he died a martyr also.

### **Khadija**

A rich widow in Mecca who employed Muhammad as her business manager and later married him in 595CE. She was the mother of Fatima and died in 619CE.

### **Layla**

The second wife of Hussain, who gave birth to his oldest son Ali Akbar in 653CE, who was killed in the battle at Karbala.

### **Mu'awiya**

A member of the Umayyad clan appointed by the third Caliph, Uthman, to be the governor of Syria. He opposed Ali as the fourth Caliph because he thought that he had not sufficiently pursued those who assassinated Uthman. He appointed his son Yazid to succeed him when he died in 680CE.

### **Muhammad** (other common spellings: Mohammed, Mohammad)

The Prophet of Islam, who was born in Mecca in 570 and died in Medina in 632CE where he is buried. He married Khadija in 595 and was the father of Fatima, thus the grandfather of Hasan and Hussain.

### **Muhammad ibn Hanafiyya**

The half-brother of Hussain, whose father was Ali and whose mother was Khawlah bint Ja'far (635-700CE.)

### **Muslim ibn Aqil**

A cousin of Hussain entrusted with the task of checking out the support for the cause of Hussain amongst the people of Kufa. His father was Ali's older brother Aqil and he was married to Ruqayyah, a daughter of Ali, and thus a half-sister to Hussain. He was killed in Kufa in 680CE.

### **Qada'ah**

The name of an Arab tribe from which Hussain had a wife, whose name is unknown, with whom he had a son called Ja'far. Both mother and son were dead by the time of the battle at Karbala.

### **Qais ibn Musahir**

A messenger sent by Hussain to tell Muslim ibn Aqil in Kufa that he was on his way. He was executed by Ibn Ziyad in 680CE.

### **Rubab**

The first wife of Hussain and the only one present at Karbala. She was the mother of Sukayna (b. 667) and Abdullah Ali Asghar (b. 680CE)

### **Sakina**

The name Sukayna, the daughter of Hussain and Rubab, is sometimes recorded as Sakina.

### **Shahrbanu**

The third wife of Hussain, with whom she had Ali ibn Hussain, later to be known as Zayn al-Abidin, in 656CE.

### **Shimr**

An adviser to Ibn Ziyad, who strengthened his will to see that Hussain was killed and acted as his agent to ensure that the deed was done at Karbala.

### **Sukayna**

The daughter of Hussain and his first wife, Rubab, born in 667CE.

### **al-Tabari**

A great Sunni scholar, who wrote multi-volume Qur'an commentary and history books. Born 839 and died 923CE.

### **Umar ibn Sa'd**

The commander of the forces of Yazid at the battle at Karbala.

### **Umayyads**

The Arab clan from which came Uthman, the third Caliph, Mu'awiya and Yazid. They formed a ruling dynasty from 661 to 750CE.

### **Umm al-Banin**

A wife of Ali and mother of four sons who were at Karbala: Abbas, Ja'far, Abd Allah and Uthman. She was of the same tribe as Shimr.

### **Umm Ishaq**

The fourth wife of Hussain, with whom she had a daughter, Fatima al-Sughra in 671CE.

### **Umm Kulthoom**

The daughter of Zaynab (see below).

### **Umm Salama**

A wife of Muhammad who looked after the young Hasan and Hussain after their mother, Fatima, died in 632 (596-680CE).

### **Uthman**

The third Caliph appointed to lead the Muslim community after the death of Muhammad. He was assassinated in 656CE.

### **Yazid**

The son of Mu'awiya, who appointed him as Caliph in 680CE.

### **Zayn al-Abidin**

The son of Hussain and Shahrbanu, his third wife, who was born in 656CE, and given the name Ali ibn Hussain. He was ill on the Day of Ashura and could not take part in the fighting. He was designated by Hussain as the fourth Imam and is known by the title Zayn al-Abidin (The Adornment of the Worshippers).

### **Zaynab** (other common spellings: Zainab)

The daughter of Ali and Fatima, the sister of Hasan and Hussain. She strengthened the survivors of the battle at Karbala and became their spokesperson in Kufa and Damascus. Eventually she persuaded the commander of her escort back to Medina to go via Karbala so that they could pay their respects to the martyrs; this is the original impulse of the Arbaeen commemoration.