**Tasu'a**

**Tasuʿa** (Arabic: تاسوعاء) is the 9th day of [Muharram](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Muharram), and it refers to [Muharram 9](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Muharram_9), 61/[October 12](https://en.wikishia.net/view/October_12), 680 the day before the [Day of 'Ashura](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Day_of_%27Ashura). On that day, [Shimr](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Shimr) came to [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala) bringing a letter from ['Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Ubayd_Allah_b._Ziyad) in which ['Umar b. Sa'd](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Umar_b._Sa%27d) was asked to either be serious in treating [Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) or leave the command of the army to Shimr. 'Umar b. Sa'd refused to leave the command of the army to Shimr and prepared to fight with Imam al-Husayn (a). After the attack of the army to the tents of Imam (a) in the evening of Tasu'a, Imam (a) sent his brother ['Abbas](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Abbas) to ask the enemy to reprieve them the night.

Also, on this day, Shimr brought a safe-conduct for 'Abbas and other sons of [Umm al-Banin](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Umm_al-Banin), but 'Abbas did not accept it. Therefore, this day is very important for Shi'a. Traditionally, Shi'as consider the day of Tasu'a dedicated to 'Abbas (a) and respect it the same as the [Day of 'Ashura](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Day_of_%27Ashura) and mention the merits of 'Abbas and mourn for him. This day is an official holiday before the Day of 'Ashura in [Iran](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Iran).

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**Meaning**

The ninth day of [Muharram](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Muharram) is called Tasu'a. The word "Tasu'a" is derived from the root *t-s-'a* (Arabic: *ت-س-ع*) meaning "nine" or "ninth". However, the fame of this day is because of the events on [Muharram 9](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Muharram_9), [61](https://en.wikishia.net/view/61)/680 occurred in [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala).

**Events**

The Day of Tasu'a is the last day [Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) and his companions spent the night on and that day is remembered with the [Eve of 'Ashura](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Eve_of_%27Ashura).

**Coming of Shimr to Karbala**

On the day of Tasu'a, before noon, [Shimr b. Dhi l-Jawshan](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Shimr_b._Dhi_l-Jawshan) and 4000 soldiers entered [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala)[[1]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-1) and brought a letter for ['Umar b. Sa'd](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Umar_b._Sa%27d) from ['Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Ubayd_Allah_b._Ziyad). In that letter, 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad had asked 'Umar b. Sa'd to either force Imam al-Husayn (a) to make [allegiance](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Allegiance) to [Yazid](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Yazid) or fight him.

'Ubayd Allah had also threatened 'Umar in the letter, that if he refuses the order, he had to withdraw from the command of the army and leave it to Shimr b. Dhi l-Jawshan.[[2]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-2)

When 'Umar b. Sa'd read the letter, told Shimr, "I will not leave the command of the army to you since I do not see the competence in you; so, I will finish this myself and you shall be the commander of the foot soldiers."[[3]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-3)

**Safe-Conduct for the Children of Umm al-Banin**

When Shimr took the letter of 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad, he was with ['Abd Allah b. Abi l-Mahal](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=%27Abd_Allah_b._Abi_l-Mahal&action=edit&redlink=1), the nephew of [Umm al-Banin](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Umm_al-Banin) and they asked 'Ubayd Allah for a safe-conduct for their nephews and 'Ubayd Allah accepted their request.[[4]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-4)

'Abd Allah b. Abi l-Mahal sent the safe-conduct to Karbala through his slave, Kazman or 'Irfan. After he arrived in Karbala, read the text of the safe-conduct for the sons of Umma al-Banin (a), but they refused it.[[5]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-5)

It is mentioned in another report that Shimr took the safe-conduct with himself to Karbala to 'Abbas (a) and his brothers ['Abd Allah](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Abd_Allah_b._%27Ali), [Ja'far](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Ja%27far_b._%27Ali) and ['Uthman](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Uthman_b._%27Ali).[[6]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-6)

'Abbas (a) and his brothers were sitting with Imam al-Husayn (a) and did not answer Shimr. Imam (a) told 'Abbas (a), "Although he is a mischief-maker, but you answer him for he is one of your uncles." ['Abbas (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Abbas_(a)), 'Abd Allah, Ja'far and 'Uthman came out and asked Shimr, "What do you want?" Shimr told them, "you are my nephews; so, you are safe and free to go since I took a safe-conduct of you from 'Ubayd Allah." But, 'Abbas (a) and his brothers said, "May God curse you and your safe-conduct! We would be safe and the son of the Prophet's (s) daughter would not be safe?!"[[7]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-7)

After rejecting the safe-conduct, the army of 'Umar b. Sa'd was ordered to prepare for the war; so, everyone got on his horse and prepared to fight [Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) and his companions on the evening of Thursday, [Muharram 9](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Muharram_9).[[8]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-8)

**Preparation for the War**

In the evening of Muharram 9, movements of the army of Kufa increased and 'Umar b. Sa'd prepared to fight with Imam al-Husayn (a) and ordered his army to prepare for the war. He shouted among his soldiers, "O the army of God! Got on [your horses] for I give you the good news of the Paradise!" The army of Kufa got on [their horses] and prepared for the battle.[[9]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-9)

The noise of the army raised. Imam (a) was sitting in front of his tent and leaned on his sword. Hearing the sound of the army of Kufa, Imam's (a) sister, [Zaynab (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Zaynab_(a)) came near brother and said, "O brother! Do you hear the sound of them approaching?" Imam (a) raised his head and said, "I met the [Prophet (s)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Prophet_(s)) in my dream and he (s) told me, 'You will [soon] come to us." Imam (a) told 'Abbas (a), "O 'Abbas! May my life be sacrificed for you; sit on your horse and go to them and ask what they want and why they have come forth?"

'Abbas (a) and twenty horsemen including [Zuhayr b. Qayn](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Zuhayr_b._Qayn) and [Habib b. Muzahir](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Habib_b._Muzahir) went to the army of the enemy and asked, "What has happened and what do you want?" They answered, "It is an order of the commander to tell you that you either pledge allegiance or prepare for the war." 'Abbas (a) said, "Do not move until I go to Imam al-Husayn (a) and deliver your message to him." They accepted, so 'Abbas (a) went to Imam al-Husayn (a) alone and gave him the news.[[10]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-10)

Imam (a) told 'Abbas (a), "See if you can convince them to postpone the war to tomorrow and give us time for tonight so that we worship and pray to God; for He knows how much I love praying to Him and reciting [His book](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Quran)."[[11]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-11)

During the time 'Abbas (a) was speaking with Imam (a), his companions, Habib b. Muzahir and Zuhayr b. Qayn used the opportunity and spoke with the army of 'Umar b. Sa'd and advised them not to war with Imam (a) and prevented them to come forth.[[12]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-12)

'Abbas (a) returned to the army of the enemy and delivered the request of Imam (a) to them and asked them to give them the night. 'Umar b. Sa'd agreed with the request of Imam al-Husayn (a) and his companions.[[13]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a#cite_note-13) On that day, the tents of Imam al-Husayn (a), his family and his companions were surrounded.

**Hadith from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a)**

In a hadith, [Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_Ja%27far_al-Sadiq_(a)) described that day as,

"Tasu'a is the day when al-Husayn (a) and his companions were besieged in [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala) and the army of [Syria](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Syria&action=edit&redlink=1) gathered against them; and 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad and 'Umar b. Sa'd became so happy of the gathering of so many forces. That day, they considered al-Husayn (a) and his companions weak and became sure that no help will come for them and Iraqi people will not support them either."

**Importance of this Day for Shia**

Because of the events occurred on this day, it is very important to [Shia](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Shia&action=edit&redlink=1). They attribute this day to 'Abbas b. 'Ali (a) and respect this day the same as the [Day of 'Ashura](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Day_of_%27Ashura) and mourn during it.

In Iran and some of the Islamic countries having a Shi'a majority, the day of Tasu'a is an official holiday the same as the Day of 'Ashura. On this day, great mourning ceremonies are held with the running of mourning, [chest-beating](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Chest-beating) and [chain-hitting](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Zanjirzani) caravans of people.

**See Also**

* [Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Husayn_(a))
* ['Abbas b. 'Ali (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/%27Abbas_b._%27Ali_(a))
* [Timeline of the Battle of Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Timeline_of_the_Battle_of_Karbala)

**Notes**

* Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 94; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mnāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 4, p. 98.
* Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 94; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mnāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 4, p. 98; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, p. 466.
* Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 183; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 415; Shaykh al-Mufīd, *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 89.
* Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 415; Ibn Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-Tārīkh*, p. 56.
* Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 415; Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 93-94; Ibn Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-Tārīkh*, p. 56.
* Ḥusaynī, *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib fī ansāb Āl Abī Ṭālib*, p. 327; Khawārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 246.
* Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 183; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 416; Khawārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 246.
* Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 184; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 416; Khawārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 249.
* Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 184; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 416; Shaykh al-Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 89.
* Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 184-185; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 416-418; Khawārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 249-250.
* Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 417; Ibn Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-Tārīkh*, p. 57.
* Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 98; Khawārazmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 249-250; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 416-417.

1. Al-Kūfī, *Al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 98; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-umam wa l-mulūk*, vol. 5, p. 417.

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https://en.wikishia.net/view/Tasu%27a