

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah,  
the All-beneficent, the All-merciful*

قال الله تعالى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.

(*Sūrat al-Aḥzāb* 33:33).

Prophetic traditions mentioned in both in Sunnī and Shī'ah authoritative reference books of *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qur'an) have confirmed that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively refer to the People of the Cloak [*ahl al-kisā'*], viz. Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn ('a) as the *Ahl al-Bayt* (People of the Household). For instance, refer to the following references: *Sunnī*: Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:231; 4:107; 6:292, 304; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130; Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al.; Al-Dūlābī (d. 310 AH), *Al-Dhuriyyah al-Ṭāhīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, p. 108; Al-Nasā'ī (d. 303 AH), *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā'*, 5:108; 113; Al-Ḥakīm al-Nayshābūrī (d. 405 AH), *Al-Mustadrak 'ala' ṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146-147; Al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH), *Al-Burhān*, p. 197; Ibn Hājar al-Asqalānī (d. 852 AH), *Fath al-Barī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7:104.

*Shī'ah*: Al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH), *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, 1:287; Ibn Babawayh (d. 329 AH), *Al-Imāmah wa' t-Tabṣīrah*, p. 47, *ḥadīth* 29; Al-Maghribī (d. 363 AH), *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, pp. 35, 37; Al-Ṣādūq (d. 381 AH), *Al-Khiṣāl*, pp. 403, 550; Al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH), *Al-Amālī*, *ḥadīth* 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse recorded in the following books of *tafsīr*: Al-Jassās (d. 370 AH), *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*; Al-Wāhidī (d. 468 AH), *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH), *Zād al-Masīr*; Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH), *Al-Jāmi' Li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*; Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Tha'labī (d. 825 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Ṭabarī (d. 875 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH), *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*; Al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH), *Fath al-Qadīr*; Al-'Ayyāshī (d. 320 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Qummī (d. 329 AH), *Tafsīr*; Furt al-Kūfī (d. 352 AH), *Tafsīr* at the margin of the exegesis of *Sūrat al-Nisā'* verse 59; Al-Ṭabarsī (d. 560 AH), *Majma' al-Bayān*, as well as many other sources.

*Arba'īn*

قال رسول الله ﷺ:

”إني تاركٌ فيكمُ الثقلين: كتاب الله، وعترتي أهل بيتي، ما إن تمسكتم بهما لن تضلوا أبداً وأنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا عليَّ الحوضَ”

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*‘itratī*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*hawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*).”

Some references:

- Al-Ḥākim an-Nayshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā’ṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533
- Muslim, *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, *ḥadīths* 5920-3
- At-Tirmidhī, *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *ḥadīths* 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219
- An-Nasā’ī, *Khaṣā’iṣ ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, *ḥadīth* 79
- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190
- Ibn al-‘Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277
- Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa’n-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209
- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Aẓīm*, vol. 6, p. 199
- Naṣīr ad-Dīn al-Albanī, *Silsilāt al-Aḥādīth aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Ad-Dār aṣ-Ṣalāfiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358

# *Arba'īn*

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## PREFACE

### *In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

Although the number 40 is an exact number in appearances, it has a complex and mysterious meaning. Some of the meanings in context with the number 40 have been spoken of. But, if we are to judge fairly, we will have to say that “Arba‘īn” (the number 40) is a skilled and capable keeper of secrets. Perhaps the Creator of the world wanted the seal to remain on closed lips for the good of the world.

A witness to this fact is the disclosure of one of its secrets in the events of ‘Āshūrā. Imām Husayn (‘a) gave a persuasive answer to the seasoned politicians who pleaded in a seemingly caring way for him to at least not take the women and children with him. He (‘a) said, “God wishes to see them as captives.” He (‘a) clearly saw that day in the future when ‘Āshūrā had to be started with the seedling of martyrdom. This tree was to grow strong and reach heights with captivity, and it was to bear fruit with Arba‘īn and repeated Arba‘īns. This is the secret of martyrdom, captivity, and Arba‘īn which has stunned the world.

The 40<sup>th</sup> of Imām Husayn (‘a) is remembered by more than 20 million people from various nationalities and sects near his shrine in the land of Iraq after the passing of 14 centuries. This multitude calls out the name of Imām Husayn (‘a) with one voice. In fact, they review human

aspirations once again. Of course, this unmatched glory increases the duty of the cultural and religious institutions, particularly the 'Āshūrā International Foundation, for the promotion of Arba'īn even if it is only a small step.

Thus, the officials of the International 'Āshūrā Foundation decided to prepare a small compilation and distribute it among those who are interested and those who participate in the March of Arba'īn in order to further introduce Arba'īn. The writing and compilation of this work was entrusted to Professor Dezhakam. Thus, the book which is before you was prepared with the hope that God willing it will be beneficial.

**Sayyid Abu Muhammad Murtazavi**  
**Deputy Research–Culture**  
**International Ashura Foundation**

## INTRODUCTION

Weeping and wailing, black dress, black flag, beating the chest with one's hand or chains, reading elegies and poems, and customs of mourning have been symbols of the epic of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) for ages. In recent years, the march of tens of millions on the 40<sup>th</sup> (*Arba'īn*) of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) for making the pilgrimage to his pure dust, which has been made by different groups and people, various nationalities, and various religions, is an enduring symbol of the human – divine movement for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and the epic of 'Āshūrā. This march also aims to deliver the divine, celestial message of the 'Āshūrā movement to the ears of the people of this material world. This sensational gathering announces the determination of millions of freedom and justice seeking people for change in the domination of leadership. It also asks all free people of the world to take a step in fighting against imperialism and the Yazids of the time; and, for them to say 'Here I am!' in answer to the call of "هل من ناصر ينصرني" made by the leader of the noble and freedom-seeking people, Ḥusayn bin 'Alī ('a).

Can the presence of a population of tens of millions be explained by other than love? Of course not! All those who wish to analyze this event with any approach or method should not ignore the aspects of 'love for Imām Ḥusayn ('a)', 'love for the goals and ideals of Imām Ḥusayn ('a)', and 'love for humanistic and global messages' in the 'Āshūrā movement.

It must be understood that commemorating 'Arba'īn' is in fact a revival of the memory of Karbala, the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn ('a), and the martyrdom of his companions. "Martyrdom without recollection, without memories, and without the boiling of the blood of the martyrs will not leave its effect."<sup>1</sup>

'Arba'īn' shows the strategy of the family of the Noble Prophet (s) to keep alive the Ḥusaynī movement forever.

"Suppose this immense massacre had happened in history. Ḥusayn bin 'Alī ('a) and the other martyrs had been martyred in Karbala. What if Bani Ummaya had been successful in eliminating any memory of Ḥusayn ('a) and his dear companions from the memories of the human race on that day and the days that followed in the same way that they had removed their pure bodies from the pages of time and hidden them under the ground? Would this martyrdom have had any use for the world of Islam? Or, what if there were only traces of them left at that time? Would these memories have remained in history and for the future generations? Would these memories have had an enlightening and revealing effect for the trials, darkness, and Yazids to come? What would have happened if Ḥusayn ('a) was martyred, but the people at that time and the future generations didn't realize he had been martyred? What effect could this memory have had for the growth, guidance, motivation of nations and communities, and on history? Of course it would have had no effect. Ḥusayn ('a) would have been martyred and he himself would have reached the highest level of Heaven and God's satisfaction. But, how instructive would this

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1. Āyatullāh Khamenei's speech in Aban, 1363/Nov.1384.

event have been? How much would he have been a role model?”<sup>1</sup>

‘*Arba‘īn*’ not only keeps the memory of the martyrs of Karbala alive, it also spreads the culture of ‘*Āshūrā*. Perhaps that is why it may be said that Karbala isn’t the end, it is the beginning. It is the start of telling the goals, ideals, values, and oppression which took place in Karbala. It is the start of revealing images of wealth, oppression, and deception which had appeared in Yazid and his caliphate. It is the start of introducing the criteria and standards for recognizing the face of this evil triangle. The Ḥusayns have always been slaughtered along with all of their ideals. Then, their murderers themselves have mourned and cried for them.

It should be accepted that *Arba‘īn* is a manifestation of love for the dust and tomb of the Leader of the Martyrs, Imām Ḥusayn (‘a), and the start of his appeal. After many centuries it still pulls the hearts of all those who are fond of the Household of the Prophet (‘a) and the broad-minded people of the world towards salvation, dignity, and honor.

This belief should also be confirmed that today *Arba‘īn* symbolizes fighting oppression, wakening from ignorance and neglect, wanting freedom, peace, and a manifestation of the unity between the movements for freedom, peace, and justice. Therefore, it should be respected and used in order to build a society free from cruelty and oppression.

This book first attempts to explain the meaning of the term ‘*Arba‘īn*’ and then speaks of how the term ‘*Arba‘īn*’ relates to Imām Ḥusayn (‘a). Next, the customs which

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1. *Ibid.*

have appeared based upon the epic of 'Āshūrā and specifically 'Arba'īn' are examined. Whether the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) came to Karbala after their captivity and after the first 40 days had passed or the second Arba'īn (the 40<sup>th</sup>) on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar of the next year is one of the important discussions of this book. An attempt has been made to explain both opinions so that the reader may decide for himself.

The philosophy of pilgrimage, the value of making the pilgrimage to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in the words of the Pure Imāms ('a), the pilgrimage of Arba'īn from documentation to contents, walking for making the pilgrimage to the shrines of the Immaculate Imāms ('a), and walking for the pilgrimage of the Arba'īn (40<sup>th</sup>) of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in the words and deeds of the scholars are some of the topics discussed in this book. An endeavor has been made to bring logical, documented explanations. In addition, a brief analysis has been made of 'the march of tens of millions' in recent years in an effort to warn of its difficulties. In the end, an overview of the life of Jābir bin 'Abdullāh Anṣārī, the first pilgrim to the pure dust of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) has been presented. And finally, several poems about the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) are offered as a conclusion to the book.

I would like to thank and appreciate all the dear ones, especially Ḥujjatulislām Sayyid Abu Muhammad Murtazavi from the office of the Deputy to the Department of Education and International Research Foundation for 'Āshūrā, who has made great efforts in helping this work to be more stimulating. I would also like to thank Mrs. Mūsavī, a hardworking researcher, and my dear brother the worthy intellectual, Mr. Muḥammad Isfandārī, who

accepted the hard work of studying this book and giving his expert opinion. I sincerely ask all the dear pilgrims who are able to read this book '*Arba 'īn*' to please pray for my late parents.

With thanks,

**Ali Dezhakam**  
**Shahrivar 1394/Sept.2015**  
**8<sup>th</sup> of Dhī al-Ḥijjah 1436**





## UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF 'ARBA'ĪN'

In the religious texts and culture some numbers have a special place. It seems the citation of such numbers in religious texts, particularly in the Holy Qur'ān, was based on a divine calculation. However, there is no evidence to show that certain numbers are holy or that there is a special meaning or intention for using these specific numbers.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most common expressions is the term 'Arba'īn'<sup>2</sup> which has frequently been used in Islamic and Qur'ānic teachings and culture. God put Adam in a mold and scale for 40 days until he reached perfection.<sup>3</sup> The Holy Qur'ān gives news of people's creation in their mothers' wombs for 40 days as a seed, 40 days as a clot, and 40 days as a lump of flesh.<sup>4</sup>

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1. According to Arbīlī's view if this were true the Ismā'īlis or the 'Seven Imāmis' would have brought tens of examples such as the fact that there are seven heavens to show that seven is a holy number. (Refer to: Arbīlī, *Kashf al-Ghummah fī M'arifah al-Ai'mmah*)

2. The word 'Arba'īn' in Arabic means forty.

3. Suhrawardī, *'Awārif al-M'ārif*, p. 209; Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī, *'Ilm al-Yaqīn*, vol. 2, p. 832.

4. Najm Rāzī, *Mirṣād al-'Ibād*, p. 38.

The Prophet Adam ('a)<sup>1</sup> wept for 40 days after his fall from God's paradise until he was forgiven. And, he cried for 40 days for the martyrdom of Abel at the hands of Cain.<sup>2</sup> The Prophet Noah ('a) prayed for severe punishment to come on the people after he had called them to monotheism for many years and only several of them had become his followers. It was after this that it rained on them for 40 days and nights. Moses' ('a) tryst was for 40 days (30 days, plus another 10 days).<sup>3</sup> When the people of Moses' ('a) ignored his command and rebelled, God left them to wander for 40 years in the desert.<sup>4</sup> Saint Maryam ('a) sought seclusion for 40 days.<sup>5</sup> Before he was raised to Prophethood, The Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)<sup>6</sup> stayed alone in the cave of Ḥarā for 40 days and nights to such an extent that the Quraysh said, "إن محمدا قد عشق ربه".<sup>7</sup> When God willed that the seed of Lady Zahrā al-Marḍiyah ('a) be planted, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and Khadījah al-Kubrā ('a) were separated beforehand for 40 nights and days and were busy in worship. And, 40 years of the honorable life

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1. The abbreviation ('a) stands for the Arabic phrases '*alayhi*'-*salām*, '*alayhim*'-*us-salām*, or '*alayhā*'-*s-salām* (May peace be upon him/them/her), which are repeated after the names of the prophets, Imāms from the Prophet's progeny, saints, and angels ('a). [Trans.]

2. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 9, p. 329.

3. *Qur'ān*, 7:142.

4. *Qur'ān*, 5:20-26.

5. *Qur'ān*, 19:16-17.

6. The abbreviation (ṣ) stands for the Arabic phrase *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ālihi wa sallam* (May God's blessings and peace be upon him and his progeny), which is repeated after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ). [Trans.]

7. 'Izādīn Kāshānī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāyah*, p. 16.

of Muḥammad (ṣ) had to pass before he saw the angel of revelation and put on the clothes of prophethood.<sup>1</sup>

In the customs and traditions on worshipping and spiritual journeying there are examples showing the importance of 'Arba 'īn', or the number 40. For instance, the springs of wisdom will pour from the heart onto the tongue of whoever wakes up 40 mornings with sincerity.<sup>2</sup> 'Alī ('a) regretted that he didn't have 40 helpers.<sup>3</sup> The Prophet Dāwūd ('a) sat in prayer for 40 days.<sup>4</sup> The skies and the earth cried for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) for 40 days.<sup>5</sup> If a person eats forbidden food, his supplications will not be accepted for 40 days.<sup>6</sup> The limits defining neighbors extends to 40 houses on each side.<sup>7</sup> One day of rule by a just ruler is better and more beneficial than 40 days of rain.<sup>8</sup> One day of patience in some situations of holy war is superior to 40 days of worship.<sup>9</sup> Each of Imām al-Mahdi's ('aj)<sup>10</sup> helpers possesses the strength of 40 men.<sup>11</sup> The Holy Prophet (ṣ)

1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 53, p. 326.

2. *Ḥadīqah al-Ūliyā'*, vol. 5, p. 185.

3. Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 509.

4. Bākhrazī, *Ūrād al-Iḥbāb*, vol. 2, p. 311.

5. Ṭūsī, *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 113; Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qādī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Tahqīq Darbāriḥ Rūz Arba 'īn Ḥaḍrat Sayyid al-Shuhadā*, p. 386.

6. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 5, p. 217.

7. Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 669.

8. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 18, p. 9.

9. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 11, p. 21.

10. The abbreviation ('aj) is repeated after the name of the last Imām, Imām Mahdī ('a), and stands for '*ajjalallāhu ta'ālā farajahu 'sh-sharīf* (May God hurry his noble return). [Trans.]

11. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, vol. 10, p. 39.

encouraged people to memorize 40 traditions.<sup>1</sup> Other places where the number 40 has been mentioned in religious texts include: advising to do acts of worship sincerely for 40 days<sup>2</sup>, praying for 40 believers<sup>3</sup>, the testimony of 40 believers as to the goodness of a person who has passed away<sup>4</sup>, the earth weeps for 40 days at the death of a believer<sup>5</sup>, most of the prophets' ('a) missions started when they were 40 years old<sup>6</sup>, the prayers of a person who drinks alcohol are not accepted for 40 days<sup>7</sup>, and God's warning people who have reached the age of 40<sup>8</sup>.

Perhaps it is with reference to the above that the Islamic mystics consider repeating acts and indoctrination for 40 times completes the spiritual dimension of man. The traditions have spoken about a person who does an action with sincerity for 40 days, 40 nights, or 40 times. Doing so opens doors of light and wisdom for this person. And, a series of reactions, pleasures, and visions begin in his spiritual life. The mystics have also chosen the number 40 for spiritual wayfaring and seclusion.

#### ***'Arba'īn' applying specifically to Imām Ḥusayn ('a)***

The only recommended pilgrimage mentioned in the traditions is the pilgrimage of 'Arba'īn'. There are no

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1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 153.

2. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 53, p. 326.

3. Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 509.

4. Ṣadūq, *Man Lā Yaḥḍarah al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 165.

5. Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 535.

6. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 13, p. 50.

7. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 17, p. 57.

8. Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 17, p. 57.

such recommendations for any other of the Immaculate Imāms ('a) before or after Sayyid al-Shuhadā ('a). In other words, there is no recommendation found for the 40<sup>th</sup> and the rituals for that day before the event of 'Āshūrā in the historical sources and traditions. Therefore, this custom is exclusively for Imām Ḥusayn ('a). Why? Apparently the time for mourning for a deceased person was not more than three days during the time of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). And, this was the custom which continued up to the time of Shaykh Ṭūsī. That is why he considered it abominable to mourn for more than one day.<sup>1</sup> What has been related in some of the books, including the book *'Akhbār al-Zaynabiyāt'*, is that the Household mourned for three days and three nights after entering Medina. The women of Banī Hāshim and other people also participated in this mourning.<sup>2</sup> Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī Tabrīzī also believed that the Household of the Prophet ('a) did not exceed what has come in the traditions of the Islamic laws when mourning for Sayyid al-Shuhadā ('a) after entering Medina, and that they did not go beyond mourning for three days.<sup>3</sup> It appears he too considered it religiously legal to mourn for three days, but not more than that.

In his book *'al-Lum'ah al-Damashqiyah'* in discussing *'Hidad'* (avoiding ornamentation for women), Shahīd Thānī has related that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "It is not permissible for a woman who has faith in God and the

1. "ويكره الجلوس للتعزية يومين وثلاثة ايام اجماعاً" (Refer to: Al-Ṭūsī, *al-Mabsūt fi Fiqh al-Imāmiyah*).

2. 'Abīdalī, *Akhbār al-Zaynabiyāt*, p. 115.

3. Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Tahqīq Darbāreh Rūz Arba 'īn Ḥaḍrat Sayyid al-Shuhadā*, Footnotes on p. 58.

Judgment Day to avoid ornamentation for more than three days for the death of someone unless it is for the death of her own husband. In that case she should mourn for four months and ten days.”<sup>1</sup>

What is apparent from the Shī‘ah and Sunnī traditions, and also the customs of the Muslims during the life of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), is that mourning and holding mourning ceremonies for someone who had passed away was for a period of three days at the most.<sup>2</sup> It would seem there were no mourning ceremonies under the name of ‘seventh’, ‘fortieth’, or ‘yearly’ in the Islamic customs. There are no traditions or historical documents announcing the martyrdom of an Imām (‘a) to be a time for national mourning, let alone the fortieth. By the same token, a tradition states that during the time of Imām Ṣādiq (‘a) the Shī‘ah only held public mourning ceremonies on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a). They didn’t even hold such mourning ceremonies for the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (‘a), Fāṭima Zahrā (‘a), or Imām Ḥasan (‘a).<sup>3</sup>

Dāwūd bin Kathīr Riqqī related, “I was with Imām Ṣādiq (‘a). He wanted some water. After he drank he wept and his eyes were drowned in tears. Then he said, ‘Oh Dāwūd! May God damn the murderer of Ḥusayn (‘a). He has made life so unpleasant. I don’t drink water without remembering Ḥusayn. Any of God’s servants who drink

1. Shahīd Thānī, *Al-Rawḍah al-Bahiyah fī Sharḥ al-Lum‘ah al-Dimishqiyah*, vol. 2, p. 63.

2. Qaṣṭalānī, *Irshād al-Sārī Lisharḥ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ṣadūq, *Man lā Yahḍaruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 184; Barqī, *al-Maḥāsin*, p. 419; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 79, p. 71.

3. Ṣadūq, *Ilal al-Sharāy*, vol. 1, p. 225.

water, remember Ḥusayn, and damn his murderer will be rewarded with God writing a thousand blessings for him, removing a hundred thousand of his sins, raising his station by a hundred thousand degrees, and it is as if he has freed a hundred thousand slaves. In addition, he will be raised on the Resurrection Day with a shining face.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, if a mourning ceremony is held for an Imām ('a), it may be considered favorable with the intention of respecting the Islamic rituals.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps there was a special reason for this emphasis on mourning for Imām Ḥusayn ('a), and that reason is that the uprising of 'Āshūrā was exceptional due to the sacrifice and selflessness of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and his companions. In the methodology of the Imāms ('a), the purpose of not holding mourning ceremonies for the other Imāms ('a), and not even the Prophet of Islam (ṣ) or Lady Zahrā ('a), was to preserve the prominence of the 'Āshūrā movement. They didn't want it to become something normal similar to other mourning ceremonies. Some have cited general traditions that the Shī'ah are sad when their leaders are sad.<sup>3</sup> They have tried to justify mourning for all of the Islamic leaders for the first ten days, but it is no secret to the religious scholars that such justifications are not sufficient reason for mourning at these other special times besides the ten days of Muḥaram. Of course, the Shī'ah have a special inner feeling and spiritual connection with

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1. Tūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 142.

2. That which Imām Bāqir ('a) stated in his will about mourning in the area of Minā for 10 years cannot be generalized to make a universal statement. His words were only related to a limited time and place in this tradition. (Refer to: Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, vol. 5, p. 117.)

3. Ṣadūq, *Khiṣāl*, vol. 2, p. 634.

their leaders. Even in celebration when they are reminded of the suffering inflicted upon the Household of the Prophet (‘a) they become sad.

Similarly, when Amīr al-Mu’minīn (‘a) buried his wife he addressed the Prophet (ṣ) and said, “My grief will last forever.”<sup>1</sup> The Shī‘ah too are always grieving over these tragedies. However, this does not mean that they consider the whole year to be a time for mourning, or that they are putting certain limitations and creating innovations (*bid‘ah*) in the religion.

There are two points which should be heeded.

A. These other mourning ceremonies mustn’t become so momentous as to lessen the importance of the mourning for Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) which has been emphasized in so many traditions. The mourning ceremony for Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) should not become just another mourning ceremony like the rest.

B. Also, other ten days of mourning or the 40ths should not be established for times which have not been mentioned in the traditions. If this were to happen, faithful people would be continually dressed in black throughout the year and be in confinement. This way of thinking should not find its way into the society that being religious is synonymous with abandoning all kinds of happiness.

#### ***‘Arba‘īn’: a religious ritual***

The uprising of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) and his helpers against the oppression of the rulers of the time, who eventually martyred him and his companions and took his household

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1. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 320.



captive, had a profound impact on Islamic history and culture. This was the first time that the rulers had openly desecrated and attacked the Household of the Holy Prophet ('a).

One of the most important effects of Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) uprising was an expression of regret on the part of those who had come in the guise of seeking revenge from the Imām. And, the people sought compensation for the oppression of the Umayyads. The people of Kufa were the first such group. Many of them had for some reason either failed to help the Imām or refused to do so. After a short time they started thinking about how they could compensate.

In the meantime, a group comprised of Rafā'ah bin Shaddād Bajallī, Abdullāh bin Wal Tamīmī, Abdullāh bin Sa'ad Azdī, and Musayyib bin Najbah Fazārī started thinking about an uprising to seek revenge due to their repentance from their actions and under the leadership of Sulaymān bin Ṣurad al-Khuzā'ī. They believed it was obligatory for them to fight the murderers of Imām Ḥusayn ('a).<sup>1</sup> Their movement came to be known under the name of '*Tawwābīn*' and with the slogan '*Yā Lithārāt al-Ḥusayn*' (in revenge for Ḥusayn -'a-).<sup>2</sup>

The basic core of this uprising was able to quickly transform itself into a large army. However, it was not able to hold up to the Umayyad army. They resisted much, but were basically defeated when Sulaymān bin Ṣurad and

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1. Ibn Sa'ad, vol. 4, pp. 292 – 293 and vol. 6, pp. 25 – 26; Ibn 'Abdulbar, vol. 3, p. 650.

2. Ibrāhīm al-Thaqafī: vol. 2, pp. 774 – 775; Ibn Mākūlā: vol. 7, p. 27; Hayshamī: vol. 7, p. 249.

the other leaders were killed. Raqā'ah bin Shaddād was the only one who remained.<sup>1</sup> However, this defeat became linked with the uprising of Mukhtār who initiated a chain of uprisings in history of those who wanted to avenge the death of Imām Ḥusayn ('a).

In addition to these uprisings for revenge, the Shī'ah also started holding mourning ceremonies to honor the uprising of Imām Ḥusayn ('a).

The uprising of the Imām ('a) started in the month of Muḥaram according to the Islamic calendar. And, the travels of the caravan of captives continued till the next month, the month of Ṣafar. Thus, these two months hold a special place with the Shī'ah. In these two months they try to respect the first ten days of Muḥaram (especially the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> which are *Tāsū'ā* and *'Ashūrā*), the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup>, and the 40<sup>th</sup> days after the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and his companions. They hold rituals such as: simulating the event, holding meetings for preaching and mourning in houses and mosques, launching walks with beating their chests in the street, reading elegies, carrying symbols of remembrance, raising flags and signs wishing to show their desire to assist the Imām ('a), feeding the public, and holding special prayers. The Shī'ah try to come closer to Imām Ḥusayn ('a) by doing these things. They shout their regret due to their inability to help him in history.<sup>2</sup>

A common ground between all of the religions is mourning for the martyrs and family of Ḥusayn bin

1. Abū Mikhnaf, p. 251; Ibn 'Atham, vol. 6, p. 217.

2. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Iqbāl*, vol. 3, pp. 19 and 46; Mufīd, *al-Ashrāf*, p. 30; Gulpaygānī, vol. 2, p. 318; Sabzavārī, p. 205.

'Alī ('a) and keeping alive their ultimate goal in the path of seeking justice, fighting oppression and injustice, and being firm on the path of God.

Of course among the religious rituals which arose due to the uprising of Imām Ḥusayn ('a), some customs have appeared over time that have been affected by the culture of the society. These rituals have led to distortions in the original meaning and the essential nature of the uprising. One such distortion is the recent ceremonies and eulogies which are read for the martyrs of Karbala. They do not conform to the basic concepts of this uprising such as fighting oppression. Instead they have found a tendency toward unusual expressions and the aesthetic appearance of Abū al-Faḍl ('a). These additions which have been made by some people and are a new way of telling about the uprising and martyrdom of the Imām ('a) are mostly added in order to make the gatherings more exciting and to make the people sadder.

The collection of behaviors which have developed with the rituals and the ceremonies for the 'Āshūrā tragedy have become a tradition which have lasted over a thousand years among the Shī'ah. These holy values are brought to display every year by repeating and showing representations of the historical events of Karbala during the two months of Muḥaram and Ṣafar, especially on the days of Tāsū'ā, 'Āshūrā, the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after the martyrdom of the Imām ('a) in the month of Muḥaram, and the 40<sup>th</sup> day after the martyrdom of the Imām ('a) in the month of Ṣafar. Each year this event is brought to the present again by repeating and reconstructing the martyrdom of Ḥusayn ('a) and has become an event which transcends time. People are trying to redress the injustice which a

corrupt and hard-hearted community brought upon the Imām ('a) by participating in these rituals, showing their solidarity with the Household of the Prophet ('a), shedding tears, and beating their chests. They are also anticipating joining the martyrs who have come closer to God.

Apart from the religious value, holding mourning ceremonies during the month of Muḥaram, gathering, and participating in them is an important factor in creating unity and solidarity among the Shī'ah from the various cultures and nations of the world. It also spreads the 'Āshūrā culture and customs to other Muslims, both Shī'ah and non-Shī'ah, and other religions in various geographical-cultural regions.

According to the historical reports, mourning ceremonies were held for the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in hiding and following the principles of dissimulation (*taqiyaḥ*) among the Shī'ah elite after the event of Karbala and up to the early fourth century. People read elegies, poets read poetry they had written about the tragedy of the Imām ('a), and they lamented his demise. Their mourning ceremonies were in hiding due to the hostile position of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs to the Household of the Prophet ('a), particularly to Ḥusayn bin 'Alī ('a), and the mourning of the Shī'ah. The hostility of the caliphs to Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and his friends was so extreme that Mutawakil, an Abbasid caliph (232 – 247 AH / 847 – 861 AD), flooded the Imām's ('a) shrine with water in the year 236 AH / 850 AD and plowed the ground there afterwards.

The first mourning ceremonies in Iran started with the first Shī'ah government of Āl Buwiyah in the year 352 AH / 963 AD by the order and encouragement of Mu'iz al-

Dawlah Daylamī. On the day of 'Āshūrā they closed Baghdad's bazaar, covered the doors and walls in black, stopped all trade, and sat in mourning. They erected tents in the bazaar and hung sackcloths from the tents and shops on this day. The women left their hair disheveled, blackened their faces, and walked in the streets and passages. They wailed, lamented, and beat their chests and heads.<sup>1</sup>

It was during the rule of Āl Buwiyah that mourning on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) became institutionalized in Iranian society. It was at this time that many rituals became common in the Iranian, Shī'ah society as a symbol of mourning on the first ten days of Muḥaram, such as: closing businesses, covering the bazaar in black, wearing black clothes, baring one's feet and head, putting one's sleeves halfway up, rubbing mud on one's head and face, abstaining from eating and drinking on the day of 'Āshūrā, women wearing black shirts and hair coverings, not using ornamentations, not coloring one's fingernails or hair with henna, and not participating in joyous celebrations.<sup>2</sup>

After the fall of the Āl Buwiyah rule some of the Sunnī rulers had a realistic outlook about the events of Karbala.<sup>3</sup> But, due to the opposition of the governments with heretics mourning mostly took place in hiding for a time. During the reign of the Taymūrān (771 – 916 AH / 1369 –

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1. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11, p. 243; Ibn al-Jawzī, vol. 8, p. 319.

2. Mu'tamadī, vol. 1, pp. 487 – 488.

3. People like Amīr Gūrkān believed the people of Ḥalab were like Yazīd, followers of those in Damascus, and the murderers of Imām Ḥusayn ('a).

1510 AD) the environment was again more suitable in Iran, and particularly in Transoxiana (Māwarā' al-Nahr), for mourning for Imām Ḥusayn ('a). The Shī'ah could show their support for the uprising of the Imām ('a), their opposition to Yazid, and damn the vicious people who had come to the plains of Karbala. At the end of the Taymūrīān period, especially after the book '*Rawḍah al-Shuhadā*' was written by Mullā Ḥusayn Wā'iz Kāshifī (d. 910 AH / 1504 AD) and many of the Shī'ah had obtained it, once again the mourning ceremonies resumed openly in Iran and Harat. During the Safavid Dynasty, with the support of the kings, the mourning ceremonies became more or less public and widespread. The inclination of the Safavid kings to Shī'ah Islam brought official recognition of this religion, created a national unity in the Iranian society, and added legitimacy to the ceremonies and religious protests among the Shī'ah of Iran and the world. Mourning ceremonies, especially during the months of Muḥaram and Ṣafar, spread. After that groups walked in the streets and beat their chests with their hands or chains, qamih zanī/tatbir (with swords), lamented, gave water to drink, and walked in groups on the eleventh of Muḥaram with lighted candles and flags turned upside down. These rituals became more regular in the cities and grew in splendor and number every year. In the Qājār period the mourning ceremonies for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) reached their peak of splendor. These ceremonies found their way from public gatherings with the majority of the people into the king's court and government places too.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Shahīdī, p. 106.

The largest Shī'ah communities in the world outside of Iran are in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Albania, Kosovo, and other places. The Shī'ah of these lands, along with some of the followers of other religions who coexist with them in common geographical and cultural boundaries, mourn during the month of Muḥaram and especially on the day of 'Āshūrā. They hold mourning ceremonies for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) which are more or less similar to those which are held by the Shī'ah in Iran, but which have a flavor of their own customs and cultural traditions too based upon their geographical area.

The Sunnī Muslims of the Indonesian and Malaysian peninsulas in South East Asia call the month of Muḥaram 'Sūrā' and 'Ḥasan and Ḥusayn'. They respect this month with a collection of religiously symbolic customs and behaviors.

Religious groups of Muslims, Hindus, and Christians who live in the archipelago of Trinidad in the Caribbean also have rituals for Muḥaram imitating the Muslims of Indian descent that migrated to this island. This group calls their rituals for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) 'Hūsī'. The religious rituals, especially the mourning ceremonies for the event of Karbala, are the most important and most appealing of Shī'ah rituals. They have changed in quality and quantity according to the conditions of the time and place. The 'Arba'īn' of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) has always received the attention of the Shī'ah as a time for religious, ritual mourning. Today this ritual is becoming a permanent, fundamental symbol of Shī'ism; and, Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) message of 'fighting oppression' is being thrown into the faces of the Yazids of the time. This ritual wants all

freedom seeking people to listen to the message of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) and help the fighters of oppression in their path.

***The first or second Arba‘īn***

The tragedy of ‘Āshūrā is the most tragic and saddest event in the history of Islam which has wounded the hearts of the Shī‘ah and the friends of the Household of Immaculateness and Purity (‘a). It is to be expected that all of its details be reported in the history books. Unfortunately it must be said that this is not the case; because, after the tragedy of ‘Āshūrā both the Shī‘ah Imāms (‘a) and the Shī‘ah followers have been under extreme pressure, harassment, torture, and prohibitions. From then on the Shī‘ah have been effectively marginalized and unable to portray the sad events of ‘Āshūrā in the way that they should. That is why there are differences of opinion between the historians in most cases. Some of these differences of opinion are as follows. Where the blessed head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) was buried? How many days was the caravan of captives held captive in Kufa? What route did they travel to Damascus? When did they arrive in Damascus? How many days did they stay in Damascus? When did they leave Damascus? Did they plan on going to Karbala or Medina when they left Damascus? What route did they travel in going to Medina or Karbala? Did Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh Anṣārī and ‘Aṭīyah ‘Awfī meet each other on the first Arba‘īn? Did Jābir make the pilgrimage to Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) on the first Arba‘īn? These are some of the differences of opinion between the historians.



There are at least two opinions as to whether the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) made the pilgrimage to the holy tomb of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) on the first Arba'īn or not.

**First Viewpoint:** Some believe that practically it was not possible for the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) to have traveled to the holy tomb of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) on their return trip from Damascus for the first Arba'īn, join his head with his body, and sit in mourning for him. It would have been impossible due to the fact that they had just been imprisoned, they had traveled to Kufa and been imprisoned there, they had traveled to Damascus and been imprisoned there, it was a long distance, they were tired from the trip, they didn't have good steeds, and other such matters. Therefore, the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) could not have traveled to Karbala for the first Arba'īn.

'Allāmah Majlisī<sup>1</sup> (d. 1111 AH), Mīrzā Ḥusayn Nūrī<sup>2</sup> (d. 1320AH), Mīrzā Abū al-Ḥasan Sh'arānī<sup>3</sup> (d. 1352 AH), Shaykh 'Abbas Qumī<sup>4</sup> (d. 1359), Shahīd Murtaḍā Muṭaharī<sup>5</sup>, Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Āyatī<sup>6</sup>, and Dr. Ja'far Shahīdī<sup>7</sup> are some of the scholars who hold this opinion. Shaykh Mufīd<sup>8</sup>, Shaykh Ṭūsī<sup>9</sup>, and 'Allāmah Ḥillī<sup>10</sup> are of

1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 98, p. 334.

2. Nūrī, *Chashm Andāzī bih Tahriḡāt 'Āshūrā: (Lū'lū' wa Marjān; M'iyārī Barāyih Sukhan wa Sukhanrānī)*, pp. 232 – 243.

3. Sh'arānī, *Dam'a al-Sujūm* (Translated by, Nafas al-Mahmūm), p. 269.

4. Qumī, *Muntahā*, vol. 2, pp. 1014 – 1015.

5. Muṭaharī, *Ḥamāsah Ḥusaynī*, vol. 1, p. 30.

6. Āyatī, *Barrasī Tārīkh 'Āshūrā*, pp. 139 – 141.

7. Shahīdī, *Zindagānī Fāṭimah Zahrā*, p. 261.

8. Mufīd, *Masār al-Shī'ah*, p. 46.

9. Shaykh Ṭūsī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahjid*, p. 787.

10. 'Allāmah Ḥillī, *al-'Adad al-Quwiyah*, p. 219.

the opinion that ‘the household of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) returned from Damascus to Medina on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar’. Therefore, they hold the opinion that the caravan of captives could not have traveled to Karbala on the first ‘Arbaīn’. Not only do they believe the household was not in Karbala, they believe the household was in Medina.

**Second Viewpoint:** Others believe that the household of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) made the pilgrimage to the pure dust of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) when they were returning from Damascus, met with Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh Anṣārī and ‘Aṭīyah ‘Awfī, and that the blessed head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) was joined to his body at the hands of Imām Sajād (‘a).

Abū Mikhnaf<sup>1</sup> (d. 157 AH), Sayyid Murtaḍā ‘Alam al-Hudā<sup>2</sup> (d. 436 AH), Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī<sup>3</sup> (d. 440 AH), Shaykh Ṭabarsī<sup>4</sup> (d. 508 AH), Sibṭ bin Jawzī<sup>5</sup> (d. 654 AH), Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs<sup>6</sup> (d. 668 AH), Zakariyā bin Muḥammad Qazwīnī<sup>7</sup> (d. 600 – 682 AH), Ibn Nammā Hillī<sup>8</sup> (d. end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century), Mullā Ḥusayn Wāiz Kāshifī<sup>9</sup> (d. 910 AH), Ibn Ḥajar Makī<sup>10</sup> (d. 937 AH), Khādamīr<sup>11</sup> (d. 942 AH),

1. Lūṭ bin Yaḥyā Abū Mikhnaf, as related by Mīrzā Ḥusayn Nūrī, *Lu’lu’ wa Marjān*, p. 157.

2. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 2, p. 200; Ṭabarsī, *‘Ilām al-Warā bā ‘Alām al-Hudā*, p. 250.

3. Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, *al-Āthār ‘an al-Qurūn al-Khāliyah*, p. 331.

4. Shaykh Ṭabarsī, *‘Alām al-Warā bi ‘Alām al-Hudā*, p. 250.

5. Sibṭ bin Jawzī, *Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ*, p. 150; *‘Ayān al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 1, p. 626; Muqarram, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn (‘a)*, p. 470.

6. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Lahūf*, p. 588.

7. Qazwīnī, *‘Aja’ib al-Makhlūqāt*.

8. Ibn Nammā Hillī, *Muthīr al-Aḥzān*, p. 59.

9. Bahā’ī, *Tawḍīḥ al-Maqāṣid*, pp. 6 – 7.

10. Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Sawā’iq al-Muhriqah*.

11. Khādamīr, *Habīb al-Sayr*, vol. 2, p. 60.

al-Shabrāwī<sup>1</sup> (d. 1172 AH), Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn 'Āmilī<sup>2</sup>, Sayyid 'Abdulrazzāq Muqarram<sup>3</sup>, Fāḍil Qazwīnī<sup>4</sup>, Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī<sup>5</sup>, Mustūfī Harawī<sup>6</sup>, Shaykh Bahā'ī<sup>7</sup>, and Mīrzā Muḥammad Ashrāqī also known as Arbāb<sup>8</sup> are some of those who have this second opinion.

Some of them have explicitly mentioned the household going to the tomb of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) on the first Arba'īn. Others have said the fact that the blessed head joined the body proves their presence in Karbala. In order to understand both of these viewpoints it is necessary to answer some questions.

**Question #1:** When did the caravan of captives leave Karbala? There is basically no difference of opinion in the fact that the blessed head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) was taken towards Kufa in the afternoon of the day of 'Āshūrā by Khawla bin Yazīd Aṣḥabī and Ḥumayd bin Muslim Azdī at the orders of 'Umar bin Sa'ad. In addition, the caravan of the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) left Karbala for Kufa as captives in the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram.

**Question #2:** When did the caravan of captives enter Kufa? The exact time when the captives entered Kufa has not been specified in the historical sources other than that Shaykh Mufīd said, "The day after the sacred head was

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1. Al-Shabrāwī, *al-Itihāf Biḥub al-Ashrāf*, p. 12.

2. Amīn, *'Ayān al-Shī'ah*, vol. 1, p. 617.

3. Muqarram, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn ('a)*, pp. 467 – 469.

4. Fāḍil Qazwīnī, *Taṭalum al-Zahrā*.

5. Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*.

6. Mustūfī Harawī, *al-Futūḥ*, p. 916.

7. Kāshifī, *Rawḍah al-Shuhadā*, p. 319.

8. Ishrāqī, *al-Arba 'īn al-Ḥusayniyah*, p. 205.

brought to Kufa the caravan of the household reached that city.”<sup>1</sup> Based on this statement some have come to believe that the captives entered Kufa on the 11<sup>th</sup> and were brought before Ibn Zīād. However, others believe that when Khawlī reached Kufa the gates to the city were closed. Therefore, he was forced to wait till the next day. Thus, Khawlī entered Kufa on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram. Shaykh Mufīd said that the captives entered Kufa the day after the sacred head did. So, the household of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) would have entered Kufa on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram, 61 AH and be taken before Ibn Zīād on that day.

**Question #3:** How many days did the household of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) stay in Kufa? There is no doubt that the household of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) was held prisoner in Kufa for a period.<sup>2</sup> But, the length of time they were held prisoners is one of the matters over which there is a difference of opinion. One viewpoint is that they did not go to Karbala on the ‘*Arba ‘īn*’ of the first year. The reason for this belief is that ‘Ubaydullāh bin Zīād wanted to ask Yazid what he should do. Therefore, he wrote a letter to Yazid after the caravan of captives entered Kufa. The normal time for this letter to go and come back would have been about 20 days. Thus, the captives stayed at least 20 days in Kufa as prisoners.<sup>3</sup> In response to the question ‘Why didn’t he use carrier pigeons,’ it is stated that firstly the use of carrier pigeons at that time was not common.

1. Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 114; Ṭabarsī, *Ilām al-Warā bi ‘Alām al-Hudā*, p. 246.

2. Āl Mikbās, *Mawsū‘ah Maqtal al-Imām al-Ḥusayn*, p. 446, Ṣadūq, *Amālī*, p. 140; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 31, p. 3.

3. Nūrī Ṭabarsī, *Lu‘lu’ wa Marjān*, p. 152.

Even Yazid's letter to the governor of Medina as to the death of Mu'āwiya and the need to get Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) pledge of allegiance was not sent by a carrier pigeon. Similarly, Yazid's letter to Ibn Zīād stating that the captives should be sent to Damascus was not sent by carrier pigeon either. Secondly, after the event of Karbala the insecurity of the cities did not allow the use of carrier pigeons.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the captives could not have left Kufa before the 25<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram, 61 AH. The author of the book '*Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*' has explicitly stated that the captives remained in Kufa till the 24<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram, 61 AH.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, those who believe the captives went to Karbala on '*Arba 'īn*' of that first year state their reasoning in the following way. Firstly, the historical sources do not mention a letter being sent by Ibn Zīād to Yazid in order to ask his duty respecting the captives and the heads of the martyrs. Some of the sources state that Ibn Zīād sent a report saying that he had carried out his mission and that he sent the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) along with the letter to Damascus.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, in some of the sources the only thing mentioned is that a courier came from Yazid with the order for 'Ubaydullāh to send the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) to Damascus.<sup>4</sup> Thirdly, there is much historical evidence to show that some people believe the distance between Kufa and Damascus is about ten days.

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1. Ibn Sa'ad, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 485; *Ma'a al-Rakb al-Ḥusaynī min al-Madīnah ilā al-Madīnah*, vol. 6, p. 83.

2. Ibn Sa'ad, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 485; *Ma'a al-Rakb al-Ḥusaynī min al-Madīnah ilā al-Madīnah*, vol. 6, p. 83.

3. Nūrī Ṭabarsī, *Lu'lu' wa Marjān*, p. 152.

4. Ibn Sa'ad, *al-Ḥusayn wa Maqtalah*, p. 190.

There are even people who have travelled this distance in less than four days. Thus, a courier could have gone and come back in ten days. Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabā'ī mentioned 17 witnesses in order to prove that the distance between Kufa and Damascus could be traveled in less than ten days.<sup>1</sup> According to this reasoning, he believed that the captives left Kufa for Damascus on the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>, or the 19<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram at the latest.

**Question #4:** Which route did the caravan travel in going to Damascus? According to the geographical map of the area, some documents, and the routes which were commonly traveled at that time for going between Kufa and Damascus, it can be said that three routes existed between Kufa and Damascus.

**First Route:** '*Rāh Sulṭānī*' is one route which passes through the cities of Takrīt, Mūṣil, Labbā, Kumayl, Till 'Afar, Naṣībīn, Ḥarrān, Ma'arraḥ al-Nu'mān, Shīzar, Kafar Ṭāb Ḥamāh, Ḥamaṣ, and 'Ayn al-Ward.<sup>4</sup>

**Second Route:** '*Rāh Bādiyah al-Shām*' is another route which is the straight path between Kufa and Damascus. This route passed through desert areas of burning, dry lands without any cities on the way.

**Third Route:** The '*Middle Route*' was the conventional route between Kufa and Damascus. It traveled along the west bank of the Euphrates River and passed by cities such as Anbār, Hayt, Qarqīsīā, Raqqah, and the area of Siffīn.

1. Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, pp. 33-133.

2. Mufīd, *Irshād*, p. 241.

3. *Sālnāmeḥ Āstān Quds Raḍavī* (7071). They believe the 19th is correct.

4. Shahīdī, *Zindagānī Imām Ḥusayn ('a)*, p. 62.

Those who believe in a first Arba'īn are of the opinion that the caravan of captives took this 'Middle Route'. This route was closer than the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route and safer and easier than the 'Rāh Bādiyah al-Shām' route.<sup>1</sup>

Although Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī believed in a first Arba'īn, he did not make a direct statement as to whether the survivors of Sayyid al-Shuhadā ('a) traveled the 'Middle Route' or not.<sup>2</sup> Based upon his words it would appear his opinion was that they traveled the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route, because he spoke of some of the events which happened along the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route and apparently approved of these accounts.<sup>3</sup>

Those who do not believe there was a first Arba'īn are usually of the opinion that the captives traveled the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route from Kufa to Damascus. Muḥadith Nūrī in approving of the opinion that the caravan of captives traveled the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route brought proof based upon the book 'Maqṭal Abū Mikhnaf wa Kāmil Bahā'ī' written by 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭabarī (d. 701 AH).<sup>4</sup> Sayyid Ja'far Shahīdī, a contemporary historian, also believes the caravan of captives traveled the 'Rāh Sulṭānī' route from Kufa to Damascus.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Amīn 'Āmilī, 'Ayān al-Shī'ah, Section One, Part Four; *Ma'a al-Rakb al-Husaynī min al-Madīnah ilā al-Madīnah*, vol. 5, p. 186.

2. Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Tahqīq Darbārih Aval Arba'īn Sayyid al-Shuhadā*, p. 33.

3. Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, p. 151.

4. Nūrī Ṭabarsī, *Chashm Andāzī bih Tahriḥāt 'Ashūrā (Lu'lu' wa Marjān)*.

5. Shahīdī, *Zindagānī 'Alī bin al-Husayn ('a)*, p. 62.

Muḥadith Nūrī says one of the proofs that they traveled the '*Rāh Sulṭānī*' route is a miracle related to the sacred head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) on the way.<sup>1</sup> Those who believe they traveled the '*Middle Route*' confirm the miracle, but are of the opinion that this miracle occurred in a part of the route which is common between the '*Rāh Sulṭānī*' route and the '*Middle Route*'.

Those who accept the first viewpoint that there was a first Arba'īn believe the caravan of captives traveled the route from Kufa to Damascus in about ten days.<sup>2</sup> Those who accept the second viewpoint believe the caravan of captives traveled the route from Kufa to Damascus in about twenty days.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, according to the first viewpoint if the caravan of captives had left Kufa by the 19<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram at the latest, they could have reached Damascus by the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ṣafar. But, according to the second viewpoint if the caravan of captives had left Kufa on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Muḥaram, 61 AH and walked for about 20 days from Kufa to Damascus, they couldn't have reached Damascus before the 15<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar.

**Question #5:** When did the caravan of captives enter Damascus? In order to answer this question it should first be understood whether the caravan of captives entered Damascus together with the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) or separately. Whether the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) was with the captives when they entered Damascus or not, is a point of controversy among the historical sources.

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1. Nūrī, *Ibid.*

2. Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid.*

3. Muḥadith Nūrī, *Ibid.*



1. Some of the sources believe the captives entered Damascus along with the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a), but they do not indicate when they arrived. Ibn Ḥabbān (d. 354 AH) has written, "Then, 'Ubaydullāh bin Zīād sent the head of Ḥusayn bin 'Alī ('a) with the women and children captives to Damascus."<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Ṣadūq has said, "'Ubaydullāh ordered for the captives and the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) to be sent towards Damascus."<sup>2</sup> Khārazmī has reported the meeting of Sahl bin Sa'ad with Sakīnah, the daughter of Imām Ḥusayn ('a). Sakīnah wanted those who were carrying the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) to walk ahead of the Ahl al-Bayt (Household) so that the eyes of the people of Damascus would be fixed on the head instead of looking at the Imām's household.<sup>3</sup> Abū Ḥanīfah Dinvari (d. 382 AH), Ibn Athīr, and Sibṭ bin Jawzī were also of the opinion that the captives went with the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) to Damascus.<sup>4</sup>

Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs related that Imām Sajjād ('a) said, "They carried me on a camel that walked with a limp. Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) head was on a spear, the women of our household were on boney camels behind me, the younger and older children were behind us, and spears were all around us."<sup>5</sup> In another place he has written, "In response to the letter of 'Ubaydullāh bin Zīād, Yazīd ordered for the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and the heads of

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1. Ibn Ḥabbān, *Kitāb al-Thuqāt*, vol. 2, p. 312.

2. Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, Meeting # 31, vol. 3, p. 230.

3. *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn ('a)*, vol. 2, p. 68.

4. Abū Ḥanīfah Dinvari, *al-Akhbar al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 260; Ibn Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 576; Sibṭ bin Jawzī, *Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ*, pp. 260-263.

5. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Lahūf*, p. 99.

those who were killed with him to be sent to him with the women and his household.”<sup>1</sup>

2. Some of the historians believe that the head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) reached Damascus before the captives did. Ibn Athīr and Khārazmī have given this opinion.<sup>2</sup>

3. One group believe that the household was sent to Damascus a period after the head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) was sent to Damascus; but, when they entered Damascus they met up with the one who was carrying his head. Shaykh Muḥīd<sup>3</sup>, Shaykh Ṭabarsī<sup>4</sup>, and ‘Allāmah Majlisī<sup>5</sup> are of this opinion.

Those who believe the caravan of captives entered Damascus along with the head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) are of the opinion that the caravan of captives entered Damascus on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ṣafar, 61 AH, because the head of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) entered Damascus on that day. This is the viewpoint of those who believe in a first Arba‘īn. Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī<sup>6</sup>, Shaykh Kaf‘amī<sup>7</sup>, Qazwīnī<sup>8</sup>, Shaykh Muḥīd<sup>9</sup>, and Ṭabarsī<sup>10</sup> may be considered a part of this

1. Ibn ‘Atham, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 127-129; Khārazmī, *Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 2, p. 62.

2. Muḥīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 118; Ṭabarsī, *‘Ilām al-Warā*, vol. 1, p. 473; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 47, p. 130.

3. Muḥīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 118.

4. Ṭabarsī, *‘Ilām al-Warā bi ‘Alām al-Hudā*, p. 473.

5. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 47, p. 130.

6. Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, *al-Athār al-Bāqiyah ‘an al-Qurūn al-Khāliyah*, p. 331.

7. Kaf‘amī, *Miṣbāḥ*, p. 510.

8. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Lahūf*, p. 99.

9. Muḥīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 118.

10. Ṭabarsī, *‘Ilām al-Warā*, vol. 1, p. 473.

group. They believe that even though the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) left Kufa before the caravan of captives, they entered Damascus together.

In contrast, there is another viewpoint of those who do not believe the caravan of captives was in Karbala on the first Arba'īn. They are of the opinion that the caravan of captives entered Damascus on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Rabī' al-Awal (66 days after 'Āshūrā).<sup>1</sup>

First of all, this viewpoint has recorded two separate dates for the entrance of Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) head and the captives to Damascus. Secondly, they do not give a fixed date for the entrance other than that which 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭabarī has said. And, he definitely believes it was not the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ṣafar, 61 AH.

**Question #6:** How long did the caravan of captives remain in Damascus? The historical reports also differ as to the length of stay of the household in Damascus.

1. Some scholars, such as Ibn 'Atham, Shaykh Muḥīd, and Shaykh Ṭūsī, have not specified a certain amount of time. They have used such terms as: “و اقاموا اياما”<sup>2</sup> (and they stayed a time), or “فاقاموا اياما”<sup>3</sup> (then, they stayed a time) in referring to the length of the stay of the captives in Damascus.

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1. 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭabarī, *Kāmil Bahā'ī*, vol. 2, p. 293.

2. Ibn 'Atham, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, vol. 5, p. 132.

3. Muḥīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 122; Ṭabarsī, *Alām al-Hudā*, vol. 1, p. 475.

2. There are some scholars, such as Muḥammad bin Jurayr Ṭabarī<sup>1</sup> (d. 310 AH), Khārazmī<sup>2</sup>, Ibn 'Asākir, Ibn Kathīr<sup>3</sup>, and Sibṭ bin Jawzī<sup>4</sup>, who believed the household were in mourning in Damascus for three days.

'Imād al-Dīn Ṭabarī believed the household mourned for seven days in Damascus.<sup>5</sup> Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs believed the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) were prisoners in the prisons of Damascus for one month.<sup>6</sup> Qāḍī Nu'mān was of the opinion that the household stayed in Damascus for a month and a half<sup>7</sup>. Majlisī believed the household mourned for seven days. On the eighth day Yazīd had them brought to him, and after trying to mollify them prepared the means for their return to Medina.<sup>8</sup> In another place he wrote, "The women of the family of Abū Sufyān mourned for the household for three days."<sup>9</sup> Muḥadith Nūrī believed that after the household had been kept in a place without a roof in the cold and heat for a month and a half, they were transferred to the house of Yazīd for ten days.<sup>10</sup> Ṭabasī Najafī believed that according to what the

1. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 4, p. 353.

2. Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, *al-Athār al-Bāqiyah 'an al-Qurūn Khāliyah*, vol. 2, p. 81.

3. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 212.

4. Sibṭ bin Jawzī, *Tadhkirah al-Khawās*, p. 262.

5. 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭabarī, *Kāmil al-Bahā'ī*, vol. 2, p. 302.

6. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Iqbāl*, p. 589.

7. Qāḍī Nu'mān, *Sharḥ al-Akhbār fī Faḍā'il al-A'imah al-Athār*, vol. 3, p. 269.

8. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 196; Majlisī, *Jalā' al-'Uūn*, p. 45.

9. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 196; Majlisī, *Jalā' al-'Uūn*, p. 45.

10. Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, p. 44.

history books seem to have recorded the household did not remain in Damascus for less than a month.<sup>1</sup> Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs related a report without stating who it was from to the effect that the household stayed in Damascus for six months.<sup>2</sup> The length of stay of the household in Damascus has also been reported to have been 18 days or 45 days.<sup>3</sup>

Those who believe in a first Arba'īn are of the opinion that the household stayed in Damascus for ten days at the most.<sup>4</sup> Those who believe there was not a first Arba'īn are of the opinion that the household was kept for a time in an open place in the cold and the heat, and that is why their faces became sunburned and were peeling. In addition, they stayed in the house of Yazid for a period, mourned there, and Imām Sajjād ('a) had a speech in the Umayyad mosque. Therefore, it is not reasonable to say that they stayed in Damascus for ten days. It would appear they stayed for more than ten days in Damascus.

**Question #7:** When did the caravan of captives leave Damascus? Those who are of the opinion that there was a first Arba'īn believe that the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) entered Damascus along with the caravan of captives on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ṣafar and stayed there till the 10<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar at the most. Therefore, it may be said that the captives left Damascus around the 10<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar. In this case, they had about ten days to reach Karbala. And, this amount of time was sufficient for them to reach Karbala and hold a ceremony for the 40<sup>th</sup> (Arba'īn). However, the second

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1. Ṭabasī Najafī, *Maqatal al-Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)*, p. 285.

2. Qāḍī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, pp. 45 - 46.

3. Yazdī, *Mahyaj al-Aḥzān*.

4. Qumī, *Nafas al-Mahmūm*, p. 463; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, pp. 9 and 198; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, p. 370.

viewpoint considers it illogical to say they stayed for only ten days in Damascus. They say the caravan couldn't have reached Damascus before the 15<sup>th</sup> of Şafar. They believe it is illogical to say the caravan could have reached Karbala by the 20<sup>th</sup> of Şafar, 61 AH, and thus, they do not accept this belief. They do not believe the household of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) was in Karbala for the first Arba'īn.

Those who believe in the first Arba'īn are of the opinion that there is also other evidence which shows the presence of the household in Karbala on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Şafar, 61 AH. One such proof is the place where Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) head is buried.

As to where Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) head is buried there are various opinions.

1. Shaykh Şadūq<sup>1</sup> (d. 381 AH), Sayyid Murtaḍā<sup>2</sup> (d. 436 AH), Fattāl Nayshābūrī<sup>3</sup> (d. 508 AH), Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs<sup>4</sup> (d. 664 AH), Ibn Nama' Ḥillī<sup>5</sup>, and 'Allāmah Majlisī<sup>6</sup> are of the opinion that Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) head was joined with his body by way of Imām Sajjād ('a). Some of the Sunnī scholars such as Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī<sup>7</sup> (d. 440 AH),

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1. Şadūq, *al-Amālī*, p. 232.

2. Sayyid Murtaḍā 'Alam al-Hudā, *Rasā'il al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā*, vol. 3, p. 130.

3. Fatāl Nayshābūrī, *Rawḍah al-Wā'izīn*, p. 192.

4. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Lahūf*, p. 114.

5. Ibn Nama' Ḥillī, *Muthīr al-Aḥzān*, p. 85.

6. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 98, p. 334 and vol. 45, p. 145.

7. Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, *al-Athār al-Bāqiyah 'an al-Qurūn al-Khāliyah*, p. 331.

Qurtubī<sup>1</sup> (d. 671 AH), and Manāwī<sup>2</sup> (d. 1031) confirm that the head was joined with the body.

2. Ibn Qawlawayh Qumī<sup>3</sup>, Kulaynī<sup>4</sup>, Shaykh Ṭūsī<sup>5</sup>, and Ibn Shahr Āshūb<sup>6</sup> believe the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) was buried beside the grave of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ('a).

3. Some are of the belief that the head of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) was buried in the Raqqah Mosque next to the Euphrates River, or in the Baqī' cemetery next to his mother, Lady Fāṭimah ('a), or in Damascus, or in Cairo<sup>7</sup>.

Those who hold the first viewpoint that there was a first Arba'īn believe that first of all the examination and study of what has been said show this result that the first opinion is correct. That is the belief that the head was joined with the body by Imām Sajjād ('a) is more reputable and trusted by the Shī'ah clerics. Therefore, this first opinion should be heeded and accepted. And, according to the historical reports which were referred to, the head was joined with the body on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar, 61 AH.

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1. Qurtubī, *al-Tadhkirah fī Umūr al-Mūtī wa Umūr al-Ākhirah*, vol. 2, p. 668.

2. Manāwī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 1, p. 205.

3. Ibn Qawlawayh Qumī, *Kāmil al-Ziyārah*, p. 84.

4. Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, vol. 4, pp. 571 – 572.

5. Ṭūsī, *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 3635.

6. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 4, p. 58.

7. Sibṭ bin Jawzī, *Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ*, pp. 265 – 266; Amīn, *'Ayān al-Shī'ah*, vol. 1, pp. 626 – 627; *Lawā'ij al-Ashjān*, pp. 247 and 250; Muḥammad Amīn Amīnī, *Ibid*, vol. 6, pp. 321 and 337. Qādī Ṭabāṭabā'ī mentioned the various opinions given on this matter and evaluated them. He believed the head was joined with the body. Refer to: Qādī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Ibid*, p. 303 and on.

Secondly, they believe the head being joined with the body is not separate from the return of the household to Karbala, because according to reliable reports this was done by Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (‘a).<sup>1</sup> And, there are no historical reports to show that Imām Sajjād (‘a) came to Karbala at another time. Thus, the household must have been present at the tomb of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) on the day of Arba‘īn too.

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1. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 145; Majlisī, *Jalā’ al-‘Uūn*, p. 407.



## ARBA'ĪN IN HISTORY

### *Arba'īn in modern Iraq*

From long ago, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims (*zā'ir*) have come to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in Iraq on the day of Arba'īn. Of course nowadays, their numbers reach to tens of millions. The mourners come in a state of grief and sadness, with bare feet and heads, dressed in black, carrying signs of those who have been afflicted by a tragedy, weeping, beating their heads and faces, and with black flags fluttering in front of each group.<sup>1</sup> These mourners give their condolences to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) for the martyrdom of his child, Imām Ḥusayn ('a). Large crowds affected by these tragic scenes beat their heads and chests. It has often been seen that the Sunnīs participate in some of the groups of mourners and mourning ceremonies for Imām Ḥusayn ('a) too. Some of them even have their own groups of mourners, and they have done this in the past also.<sup>2</sup>

When the Ba'athist regime came to rule under Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr the policy of repression and violence intensified against the Shī'ah, who were the majority of the people of Iraq. One of the bloody actions of the Ba'athist regime was to violently prohibit the mourning

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1. Sayyid Ṣamsām al-Dīn Qawāmī, *Arba'īn Shanāsnāmeḥ Tārikhī Shī'iān*, Shī'a News, Āzar 27, 1392.

<http://www.Shī'a-news.com/fa/news/64869>

Accessed: Mehr 17, 1394.

2. *Ibid.*

rituals of Shī'ah caravans. On several occasions the Iraqi Ba'athist regime prevented the processions of mourners that were walking to Karbala (especially those coming from Najaf) between the years 1390 A.H/1968 and 1397 A.H/1975. And, sometimes they murdered many of them. That is why the processions of walkers, the slogans they repeated along the way, and the speeches all began to challenge the Ba'athist regime. Massive waves of men from various cities, especially Najaf, started out with the slogan "إبدا و الله ما ننسى حسيناً" (We swear to God, we will never forget Ḥusayn). The regime instituted different programs to stop the pilgrims from reaching Karbala. Conflicts erupted, and a number of pilgrims were martyred. When these processions reached Karbala, there were even worse occurrences. More people were martyred, and a large number were arrested. The Arba'īns of those years were recorded in history, and they became the source of inspiration and fervor for the following years.<sup>1</sup>

Ṣadām stopped all of the mourning rituals for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) during his reign of more than 30 years. But, after the fall of the Ba'athist regime the suppressed hatred of many years came out into the open, and there was an explosion of the presence of the Shī'ah in the holy shrines. The ritual of walking for the pilgrimage on Arba'īn has turned into the largest, most magnificent, international

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1. Ra'ad al-Mūsawī wrote extensively on this tragedy in his book *Intifāḍah Ṣafar al-Islāmiyah*. He himself had witnessed this event. There is also an expansive report about this red Arba'īn in the magazine *Payām Inqilāb*, numbers 156 – 163. There are a series of articles on this topic in the journal *Faṣlnāmah Ziyārat* which were written by the author in quoting Javād Muḥadithī, *Farhang 'Āshūrā*, pp. 46 – 47.

rally of the Shī'ah. Nowadays, the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) witnesses the active participation of Muslims from Iraq and other Islamic countries more than all other occasions. The statistics from various centers show that the pilgrimages for Arba'īn in recent years have been the largest human gatherings in the world.<sup>1</sup> Each year, huge numbers of followers of other religions, including Christians, enter Karbala along with the processions and groups of mourners to participate in the Arba'īn rituals for the Master of the Martyrs ('a).

In recent years, the Iraqi government has planned strict security measures to maintain the safety of the mourning rituals of Arba'īn. Tens of thousands of police are responsible for maintaining the safety of the pilgrims for Imām Ḥusayn ('a). Despite tight security measures, the Takfiri terrorists have brought bloodshed to the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in Iraq each year. For example, in the

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1. Various media sources which have observed the routes leading to Karbala during the time of Arba'īn have acknowledged that the crowd of pilgrims to Imām Ḥusayn ('a) on the day of Arba'īn is about 20 million. The farewell ceremony to Imām Khomeini (May God's mercy be upon him) in the year 1989 is the second largest peaceful gathering on the list of the Wikipedia site. Muḥammad Riḍā Zār'a Khūrmīzī, *Arba'īnhāya Khūnīn, Nigāhī bih Barkhī az Ḥamalāt Khūnīn bih Marāsīm Arba'īn dar Dūrah M'uašīr*, Paygāh Khabarī, Adhar 26, 1392/2013.

<http://www.alarbaeen.ir/>

Accessed: Mehr 18, 1394/2015.

Wikipedia, List of largest peaceful gatherings in history. October 8, 2015.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_largest\\_peaceful\\_gatherings\\_in\\_history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_largest_peaceful_gatherings_in_history)

Accessed: October 10, 2015.

year 1392/2013 Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, the commander of the Takfiri in Iraq, threatened to kill the pilgrims going to Imām Ḥusayn ('a) for Arba'īn. In an audio file which they released he said, "For several years the presence of the Shī'ah on Arba'īn has grown. This year we will enter with all of our forces. We will massacre all of the Shī'ah this year, just like 'Āshūrā of 61 AH!... The pilgrimage to Ḥusayn [Ḥaḍrat Sayyid al-Shuhadā ('a)] on Arba'īn has become a symbol of Shī'ah unity. We must strike a serious blow to this unity and empathy."<sup>1</sup>

Since the formation of the march of tens of thousands on the Arab'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a), thousands of pilgrims to Imām Ḥusayn ('a) have been martyred in various cities of Iraq and Pakistan by the Takfiri. They have experienced a bloody Arba'īn. However, this movement goes on till it removes the foundations of bigotry and ignorance and burns the roots of the Tarkiris in order to totally eliminate them.

#### *Arba'īn in modern Iran*

The use of symbols and rituals which have a root in Islamic, religious culture is one of the things which shows how the Islamic Revolution in Iran is. On the one hand, the political and intellectual leader of the Islamic Revolution has used these symbols to show the extent the teachings of religion have affected the Iranian people. On the other hand, unknown and hidden, religious, cultural potential has been activated. Among the symbols and

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1. *Ḥamlah Khumpārḥāya bih 'Azādārān Arba'īn Husaynī*, Paygāh Khabarī, Tābnāk, Adhar 30, 1392/2013.

Accessed: Mehr 15, 1394.

<https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/366142>

rituals which helped the victory of the Islamic Revolution were the influential, political 'Arba'īns' or 'Fortieths' for the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a). That which came to be known as the 'Arba'īn Movement' in Iran leading up to the victory of the Islamic Revolution started with the martyrdom of Āyatullāh Muṣṭafā Khomeini. And, it was tied with the uprising of the people in Qum on the 19<sup>th</sup> of Day 1356/1979, the fortieth of the martyrs of the people's uprising in Qum which took place in Tabriz on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Bahman 1356/1979, the fortieth of the martyrs of the people's uprising in Tabriz which took place in Yazd on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Farvardin 1357/1979, and the continuation of such uprisings in other cities.

The 'Arba'īniyah' or 'Political Fortieth' movement of the martyrs in Qum, Tabriz, and Yazd brought so much new life to Iran's Islamic Revolution that it resulted in the complete overthrow of the Pahlavi regime within one year. This movement began by utilizing the Shī'ah, religious rituals. More than anything else it caused the popularity and influence of Iran's leader among the people to be recognized. On the other hand, it liberalized the enormous potential of the people's force. After the 'Political Fortieths', the revolutionary forces became more united than before. It was this unity and uniformity which pushed the train of the Islamic Revolution forward to the station of victory.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Yāsīr Kan'ānī, *Chegūnagī Paydāyish wa Barpā'ī Marāsim Arba'īn Ḥusaynī dar Zangbār*, Paygāh Iṭīlā' Rasānī Ḥūzah, Bahman 1389.

Accessed: Mehr 17, 1394.

<http://www.hawzah.net/fa/magazine/view/5658/7720/97701>

'Arba'īn' still plays an important role. The March of Arba'īn is becoming more magnificent every year despite the violent measures of the repressive governments and Takfiri terrorists. The march to Karbala during the time of Arba'īn is the largest qualitative and quantitative march in the world according to the official statistics of the non-Muslim media. It has effectively become a symbol of Shī'ah power. And, it will continue till it unifies all freedom-loving people and justice-seekers with all beliefs, nationalities, and religions on one point. That point is fighting oppression.

***The philosophy of going on pilgrimage***

Pilgrimage is a longing which involves inclination and tangible movement. However, the heart must also have a strong desire. Plus, there should be feelings of reverence and respect for the person one is going to visit when making this pilgrimage. There are three pillars to making a pilgrimage: the pilgrim, the person who is visited, and spiritual attributes or heart's desires which must be with reverence. It is obvious that if the foundations of these pillars are stronger, the effects of this pilgrimage will also be more concrete and obvious. That is to say the pilgrim should have more knowledge, faith, and personal perfection. The one who is being visited should be holy and effectual in the cosmos. And, the decision to make the pilgrimage should be made with complete understanding and seriousness. In this case, certainly a more complete manifestation of the pilgrimage will be offered. Therefore, pilgrimage is a genuine reality and not an imaginary thought devoid of truth.

Pilgrimage is a live and effective communication between two living beings. Perhaps one of the reasons the Household ('a) have emphasized making pilgrimage to such an extent, and spoken of the vast blessings it has, is based upon this point. The reality of this visitation (زیارت) before and after death is one and the same. Its effects and function are the same on the individual, the society, and the rewards gained including intercession and ... That is why the Noble Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The person who visits me during my life or after my death, will be in the vicinity of my mercy and grace."<sup>1</sup>

It goes without saying that all the activities of a religious person in God's way are justifiable.<sup>2</sup> And, pilgrimage is not an exception to this rule. The ultimate goal of the pilgrim in making a pilgrimage should be God and seeking nearness to the divine realm. It is only in this case that making a pilgrimage is not in conflict with Monotheism. This is exactly Monotheism.

That is why Islam has never been opposed to the tradition of making a pilgrimage (*Ziyārah*), and has even emphasized doing so. When Islam entered the territories of Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and other lands where there were the tombs of prophets and righteous people, Islam did not object to them. Even those who came with the title of the caliph of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) later on did not object to the presence of these tombs. They supported these tombs and emphasized protecting them. In addition, they put religious, committed people to be the trustees of these shrines.

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1. Ibn Qawlawayh, *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, Chapter 2, vol. 11, p. 45.

2. *Qur'ān*, 5:18; 42:53; 84:6; 52:42.

The Holy Qur'ān has even issued directives in this same context and tells the Muslims, "Choose the place of Ibrahim ('a) as a place of worship. Make the effort between Ṣafā and Marwāh in remembrance of the effort which Hājar, the wife of Ibrahim ('a), made in trying to find water for her son Ismā'īl."

Islam has shown respect for the stone of Ismā'īl, which is another sign. And, it is within the region for the Ṭawāf (circumambulation). If someone makes the ṭawāf within this region his circumambulation will be invalid, because the graves of holy prophets ('a) are in that location. Similarly, 'Ramī Jamarāt' (stoning the devil) three times and making a sacrifice in Mina are part of the Ḥajj rituals of Ibrahim.

The aim of these commands is to perpetuate the memory of great religious leaders, their efforts to promote humanity, and to carry out God's orders.

God, the Exalted, put all of these as reminders for mankind throughout history for him to learn sacrifice and struggle for spiritual development and perfection. 'Alī bin Ja'far related that he asked his noble brother, Imām Mūsā bin Ja'far ('a), "Why was 'Ramī Jamarāt' made a part of the Ḥajj rituals?" The Imām ('a) answered, "When Satan appeared before Ibrahim ('a), he threw stones at him and this became a permanent part of the Ḥajj rituals."<sup>1</sup>

It has been related that Imām Ṣādiq ('a) said, "When Ibrahim ('a) placed Ismā'īl in Mecca, he became thirsty after a time. His mother traveled between Ṣafā and Marwā

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1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 99, p. 39.



seven times in search of water. God made this a part of the Ḥajj ritual.”<sup>1</sup>

Throughout history the Muslims have insisted on keeping alive the memory of religious personages. Sometimes this has been done by collecting and writing about their way of life. Sometimes it is done by remembering their birth and death anniversaries. At other times they are remembered by converting their personal homes into museums. And, they are sometimes remembered by building and repairing their graves, or by building rooms over them and by making pilgrimage to these graves.

The first and most important tomb which Islam has paid attention to is the grave of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). In making the pilgrimage to his tomb the Muslims pursue the secret of glory, the source of grace, and the foundation for their own dignity. They even honor the places related to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) such as the house where he was born in the city of Mecca and the cave of Ḥirā where he received revelation for the first time and became a prophet. After these places related to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) the people turn their attention to the shrines and monuments of the Imāms (‘a) and the righteous companions. Even their houses are shrines which the people visit, because God has said,

﴿ فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا أَسْمُهُ ﴾<sup>٢</sup>

Jalāl al-Dīn Sīūṭī related from Anas bin Mālik and Buraydah that when the Messenger of God (ṣ) recited this

1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 99, p. 36.

2. *Qur’ān*, 24:36.

verse, a man stood up and said, “Which houses are these?” The Prophet (ṣ) answered, “The houses of the prophets.” Abū Bakr stood up, pointed to the house of ‘Alī and Fāṭimah (‘a), and said, “Oh Messenger of God! Is this house one of those houses?” The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, “Rather it is the best of them.”<sup>1</sup>

So what is the difference between the houses in which these Imāms (‘a) lived and the houses where their pure bodies are laid to rest? In the traditions of the Muslims there is no difference between these two. The Muslims believe the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and his pure, truthful Household (‘a) are alive and receive sustenance from the Lord. In the same way, the martyrs are given sustenance, and they are in the third rank after the prophets and the truthful ones (*ṣiddīqin*).<sup>2</sup>

***The value of making the pilgrimage to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) in the words of the Immaculate Imāms (‘a)***

Visiting the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) has long been a matter of attention of the Imāms (‘a), scholars, and Sh‘īah. Even in times of difficulties and numerous problems people have been willing to sacrifice their lives in order to make this pilgrimage. Pilgrimage to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) has been a political battle at times. It has been a fight with oppression. And, it has been an act of worship.

It is related that Imām Ṣādiq (‘a) said, “He who wishes to be in the rays of God’s mercy on the Day of Judgment

1. Sīūfī, *al-Dur al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bil-M’athūr*, the interpretation of Chapter Nūr.

2. *Qur’ān*, 4:69.

should be one of the pilgrims to Imām Ḥusayn (‘a).”<sup>1</sup> He also said, “On the Day of Judgment there is no one who does not wish to be one of the pilgrims to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a), because he sees how magnanimously and with respect to God deals with these pilgrims.”<sup>2</sup>

It has been reported that Ḥannān bin Sudayr related that Imām Ṣādiq (‘a) said, “Make the pilgrimage to the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn (‘a), and do not anguish him because he is the Master of the Martyrs and the leader of the youth in Heaven.”<sup>3</sup>

The following quotes have also been reported from him. “The pilgrim (*zā’ir*) to Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī (‘a) is the pilgrim (*zā’ir*) to the Messenger of God (ṣ).”<sup>4</sup> “Whoever wants the throes of death to be easy for him should make the pilgrimage to Ḥusayn (‘a) many times.”<sup>5</sup> “If God wants good for a person, He puts the love of Ḥusayn (‘a) and making the pilgrimage to him in his heart. And, if God wants evil for a person, He puts hatred for Ḥusayn (‘a) and making the pilgrimage to him in his heart.”<sup>6</sup> “If a person visits Ḥusayn (‘a) with understanding of his right, God will record his name in the highest Heaven (*‘Alā ‘Ilīyīm*).”<sup>7</sup>

‘Abdullāh bin Bakīr related that Imām Ṣādiq (‘a) said, “Oh ‘Abdullāh! God chose six areas on earth: the Sacred House of God, the prophets’ tombs, the tombs of their

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1. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 101, p. 73.

2. *Ibid*, p. 72.

3. *Ibid*, p. 6.

4. Ibn Qawlawayh, *Kāmil al-Ziyārat*, p. 150.

5. *Ibid*.

6. *Ibid*, p. 142.

7. *Ibid*, p. 125.

successors, the place of the martyrdom of the martyrs, and mosques where God's name is remembered. Oh 'Abdullāh! Do you know what reward has been set aside for the person who makes the pilgrimage to the grave of Imām Ḥusayn ('a)?! No morning passes without a crier from among the angels calling out over the head of the pilgrims to the grave of Ḥusayn ('a), 'Oh you who are in search of blessings, come to the Being of your Lord with dignity. All of those in the East and the West hear this call, and none of the archangels of the angels of God remains on the earth that doesn't become compassionate with this pilgrim. They praise God above his head and ask for God's satisfaction for him. Even the prophets pray for the person who makes the pilgrimage to Ḥusayn ('a)."

He also stated, "The person who wishes to be in the vicinity of the Messenger of God (ṣ), 'Alī ('a), and Fāṭimah ('a) should not abandon making the pilgrimage to Ḥusayn ('a),"<sup>1</sup> and "Fāṭimah ('a) is present among those who make the pilgrimage to her son Ḥusayn ('a), and she asks for forgiveness for them."<sup>2</sup>

Imām Ṣādiq ('a) stated, "Visit the grave of Ḥusayn ('a). He is the leader of the young people who were martyred in the way of God."<sup>3</sup> He also said, "Visit Ḥusayn ('a) even if it is only once a year. Whoever comes to visit him while knowing his right and without denying the right of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), will have no (lesser) reward than Heaven. He will be given abundant sustenance. God will quickly resolve his difficulties, because God has made four

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1. Ibn Qawlawayh, *Kāmil al-Ziyārat*, p. 137.

2. *Ibid*, p. 118.

3. *Ibid*, p. 109.

thousand angels responsible to cry for Ḥusayn (‘a) every morning and evening and to accompany his pilgrims until they return to their houses. If they become sick, these angels visit them. If they pass away, the angels come to his funeral and ask for forgiveness for him.”<sup>1</sup> And, he said, “The shrine of Ḥusayn (‘a) is one of the gardens of the gardens of Heaven. All of the archangels and prophets ask God to be able to visit Ḥusayn (‘a). So, a group of them come down, and a group of them go up.”<sup>2</sup>

Muḥammad bin Muslim related that Imām Ṣādiq (‘a) asked, “Do you go to visit the grave of Ḥusayn (‘a)? I answered, “Yes, but with fear.” The Imam (‘a) said, “The harder this pilgrimage is the more rewards it has. The amount of blessings is according to the amount of fear. If a person makes the pilgrimage to Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) with fear, God will remove fear on the Day of Judgment from him. And, He will pass on him. The angels greet him. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) comes to visit him and prays for him. He becomes so drowned in God’s blessings and grace that not even an insect can harm him. And, He is subject to God’s pleasure.”<sup>3</sup>

Zurārah related that he asked Imām Bāqir (‘a), “What is your opinion about a person who goes with fear to visit your ancestor?” The Imam (‘a) said, “God gives him security on the Day of Great Fright (the Judgment Day). The angels meet him with glad tidings and tell him, ‘Don’t fear and don’t be sad. Today is a day of ease for you.’”<sup>4</sup>

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1. *Ibid*, p. 86.

2. Majlisī, *Ibid*, vol. 101, p. 61.

3. *Ibid*, p. 127.

4. Majlisi, *Ibid*, vol. 101, p. 10.

Mu'āwiyah bin Wahab related that Imām Ṣādiq ('a) said, "Oh Mu'āwiyah! Do not refrain from making the pilgrimage to the grave of Ḥusayn ('a) due to fear; because, whoever refrains from making this pilgrimage will regret on the Judgment Day and wish that he could come out of the grave and make the pilgrimage to Ḥusayn ('a). Don't you desire that God see you, His prophet prays for you, and so do Fāṭimah and 'Alī ('a)?"<sup>1</sup>

'Abdullāh bin Bakīr reported that he told Imām Ṣādiq ('a), "I am struggling with myself. My heart is eager to visit Imām Ḥusayn ('a), but I fear the government agents." Imām Ṣādiq ('a) responded, "Oh 'Abdullāh! Don't you know if a person is afraid and his fear is because of us, God will place him in the shade of His throne on the Judgment Day? He will speak with Ḥusayn ('a). He will be safe from the terror of the resurrection. When people are frightened and calling for help, the angels will take him and give him tranquility and glad tidings."<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Ṣābiḡh Mālikī wrote, "The body of Ḥusayn was laid to rest in the soil of Karbala in Iraq. His burial place in this city is famous. People come from all over to visit him."<sup>3</sup>

'Uqbah bin 'Umar Sahmī, the famous Arab poet, went on pilgrimage to Karbala towards the end of the first century. When he reached the holy shrine of Sayyid al-Shuhadā ('a), he stood facing the grave and began to recite an elegy. In a part of this elegy he said, "I reviewed the grave of Ḥusayn ('a) in Karbala. A flood of tears fell upon

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1. *Ibid*, p. 9.

2. *Ibid*, p. 11.

3. Ibn Ṣābiḡh, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah fī M'arifah al-A'immah*, the section related to Imām Ḥusayn ('a).

it from my eyes. May God's peace be upon the people of the graves which lie in Karbala!"<sup>1</sup>

Ismā'īl bin Muḥammad Ḥimyarī (d. 178 AH), another Arab poet, has written in a part of his elegy, "Pass beside the grave of Ḥusayn. Say, 'Oh life! After the body of Ḥusayn ('a) was trampled under the horses' hooves, you are no longer sweet for me. Oh grave which is holding a pure body. He and his father were the best of creation. They were the successors to the Messenger of God (ṣ), used to doing good (deeds), and satisfied with their Lord's satisfaction.' So, when you reach his grave, pause longer. Lament with pure tears over a pure person."<sup>2</sup>

Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī bin Ḥammād Baṣrī (d. the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AH) said, "Go towards the grave of the person who is a treasure of knowledge and piety. Beg your tears to flow. Put your face on the pure dust of Ḥusayn. Address his noble grave and say, 'You were worthy to attain such a position! The sweet basil of the Prophet (ṣ) is in you. This person had an esteemed position in the eyes of the Prophet (ṣ). Oh grave! A person of patience and science is in you. This is an honor for you. A person is resting in you whose martyrdom shook the pillars of religion, while prior to that they were firm through his guidance.'"<sup>3</sup>

Ḥāj Ḥāshim Ka'bī (d. 1231 AHL) said, "By God, if you go to Karbala, convey my greetings. Kiss the pure dust of Ḥusayn ('a), cry much, and heal the illnesses of your soul."

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1. Shubbar, *Adab al-Ṭaf*, vol. 1, p. 52.

2. *Ibid*, p. 198.

3. Shubbar, *Adab al-Ṭaf*, vol. 1, p. 52.

It seems that sincerity, knowledge of the rights of Imām Ḥusayn ('a), and struggling to follow the way of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in theory and practice are a part of the fundamentals of visiting the shrine of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and the rewards coming from that pilgrimage.

***The Ziyārah Arba'īn supplication, from documentation (sanad) to contents (muḥtawā)***

In the famous tradition of Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī ('a), *Ziyārah Arba'in* – whether it is read on the soil and tomb of the Master of the Martyrs (*sayyid al-shuhadā'*) ('a) or from afar – is regarded as one of the five signs of a faithful (*mu'min*), on the basis of what has reached us. What is important is paying attention to the concepts mentioned in this supplication.

Imām al-Ṣādiq ('a) taught the text of *Ziyārah Arba'in* to Ṣafwān bin Mihrān (known as Ṣafwān Jammāl) and told him to read the supplication between the time the sun rises on the day of *Arba'in* until noon. This recommendation conveys something of the importance of this authentic (*ma'thūr*) *Ziyāratnāmih*<sup>1</sup>.

The text of the *Ziyāratnāmih* has been quoted in *Iqbāl al-'Amāl* by Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs, *Al-Mazār al-Kabīr* by Muḥammad bin Ja'far al-Mashhadī, *Al-Miṣbāḥ* by Kaf'amī, and *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid* by Shaykh al-Ṭūsī. 'Allāmah Majlisī has also quoted it in volume 98 of *Biḥār al-Anwār* on the authority of Shaykh al-Ṭūsī's *Al-Tahdhīb*. Although there are minor differences in some wordings

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1. A *ziyāratnāmih* is a written prayer to be recited at the time of performing a pilgrimage. [Trans.]



among the versions, in general it is proven, one and the same, and reliable.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, there is an appendix to *Ziyārah Arba'īn* with the title 'Farewell' (*wadā'*), as mentioned in Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs' *Iqbāl al-'Amāl*, which according to him, must be recited at the back of the holy shrine [of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)].

The *Ziyārah Arba'īn* has lofty contents and sublime concepts, and it is worthwhile for every pilgrim (*zā'ir*) to recite it, reflect on its contents, and ponder over it. Perhaps, the most important points of *Ziyārat Arba'in* are firstly, it states the objective of the uprising of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) which is nothing but to remove the clouds of ignorance and negligence from the horizon of life of the human beings and for their guidance. Secondly, it identifies the enemy who fell prey to the deceit of the world and carnal desires and who most readily exchanged his eternal bliss and felicity for this world. Thirdly, it declares that it is necessary to make sacrifice for the guidance of society, to break the atmosphere of suffocation, and to struggle against innovations (*bid'ah*) and deviations (*inḥirāf*).

Perhaps it can be said that *Ziyārat Arba'in* is a sort of 'renewal of allegiance' (*tajdīd al-mīthāq*) with Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a), the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a) and the infallible Imāms ('a). It is an instrument of showing devotion to them, their way and their ideology. It is a means of expressing enmity and disassociation from their murderers and enemies. It means attachment to the people of truth

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1. Refer to: *Mawsū'ah Ziyārat al-Ma'šūmīn*, Mu'ssasat al-Imām al-Hādī, vol. 3, p. 924.

(*tawalli*) and detachment from the people of falsehood (*tabarri*). It is a declaration of readiness to offer sacrifice on their sacred path. It is a declaration of the positions and integration with the luminous line of the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('*a*) of the Prophet (*ṣ*). It means following, submitting to and helping them. It means knowing the faces of truth and falsehood as well as the leaders of light (*nūr*) and fire (*nār*). And, it means understanding the issues of *jihād*, martyrdom (*shahādah*), and the path of self-sacrifice in the way of this school of thought and belief. [These are some of] the benefits of knowing the philosophy of '*Āshūrā* and the *Ḥusaynī* uprising.

#### ***The first pilgrim (zā'ir)***

More or less there is a consensus of opinion among the historians that Jābir bin 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī is the first pilgrim (*zā'ir*) [to the grave of] Imām al-Ḥusayn ('*a*). As such, it seems useful to briefly introduce him to the dear pilgrims of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('*a*).

#### **Jābir's father**

'Abdullāh, the father of Jābir, was one of the seventy people who went to Mecca and paid allegiance to the Prophet (*ṣ*) in Mina prior to the Holy Prophet's emigration (*hijrah*) to Medina. When this group returned to Medina, they prepared the ground for his emigration to Medina and after the Holy Prophet's emigration to Medina, they strived hard in the propagation of Islam. Bin Kathīr al-Damishqī narrated from 'Abdullāh, the father of Jābir, that the Messenger of Allāh (*ṣ*) said about him, "God shall give

wholesome reward to you *Anṣār*,<sup>1</sup> especially the descendants of ‘Amr bin Ḥarām (the family of Jābir) and Sa‘ad bin ‘Ubādah.<sup>2</sup> ‘Abdullāh actively participated in the Battle of Badr. When he was in the camp of the Muslims, he came to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and regarded the choice of this location as a good omen and a sign of the victory of Islam.”<sup>3</sup>

It is narrated that, “A few days prior to the Battle of Uḥud, ‘Abdullāh, the father of Jābir, saw in a dream one of the martyrs of the Battle of Badr by the name of Mubashshir bin ‘Abd al-Mundhir, telling him, ‘You shall join us in a few days.’ ‘Abdullāh asked: ‘Where are you located?’ He said, ‘I reside wherever I like in paradise.’ ‘Abdullāh [also] asked: ‘Were you not martyred in [the Battle of] Badr?’ He replied, ‘Yes, then I came alive again.’”

When ‘Abdullāh narrated this dream for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), he said, “This is glad tidings of your martyrdom.” Perhaps it was because of this dream that on the night before the Battle of Uḥud, he made this will (*waṣīyyah*) to his son Jābir, “I hope to be in the company of the first group of martyrs. I advise you to be good to your sisters.” Jābir is also reported to have said, “When the Battle of Uḥud took place, my father summoned us and said, ‘I can see myself becoming among the first group of martyrs of the Prophet’s army. After the Prophet, I shall not leave anyone more beloved to me than you. Repay my debt and be kind to your sisters.’”

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1. *Anṣār* is a title given to the Muslims of Medina who helped the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Muslims of Mecca who migrated (*hijrah*) to Medina. [Trans.]

2. Ibn Kathīr, *Jāmi‘ al-Masānīd*, vol. 24, p. 359.

3. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 14, p. 87.

During the disobedience of a group of the Muslim army who were instructed by the Prophet to stay on the Mount Marmāh (*Jabal al-Marmāh*), only twelve people stayed on foot and one of them was ‘Abdullāh, the father of Jābir. Meanwhile, a group of two hundred people from the army of Quraysh attacked the Muslims from behind [the Mount Marmāh] and martyred the twelve persons who fought valiantly. As recommended by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), ‘Abdullāh, the father of Jābir, and ‘Amr bin al-Majmu‘, the husband of Jābir’s paternal aunt, were buried together in a single grave.<sup>1</sup>

### **Jābir and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)**

One year prior to the emigration (*hijrah*) of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to Yathrib,<sup>2</sup> seventy people from Yathrib performed the *Hajj* pilgrimage and met and talked with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in Minā. Among these seventy people were ‘Abdullāh, the father of Jābir, and Jābir himself. It was the first meeting of Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Jābir was present in the battles and [other] important events during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) such as the Battle of Muraysī‘, the Battle of Aḥzāb, the Battle of Banū Qurayzah, the Treaty of

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1. Wāqidī, *Al-Maghāzī*, vol. 1, pp. 266-269; Ibn Abī'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 14, pp. 262-265; Ibn Hāshim, *Sīrah*, vol. 2, p. 106 and vol. 3, p. 104.

2. Yathrib is the former name of the town which was renamed *Madīnah al-Nabī* [City of the Prophet] after Prophet Muḥammad’s (ﷺ) migration [*hijrah*] there. It is now called Medina (Madīnah). [Trans.]

Ḥudaybiyah, the Battle of Khaybar, the Conquest of Mecca, the Siege of Ṭā'if, and the Tabūk Expedition.<sup>1</sup>

Imām al-Bāqir (‘a) said:

“We were in the presence of Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh. He inquired as to the well being of each of those present until he came to me. I introduced myself. He turned to me and opened the top and bottom buttons of my clothes and put his palm on my chest and said, ‘Welcome my brother’s son! Ask whatever you want.’ I said, ‘Tell me something about the Farewell Pilgrimage (*ḥajj al-wadā*).’ Jābir said, ‘The Messenger of God (ṣ) stayed in Medina for nine years without performing the *Ḥajj* pilgrimage until the 10<sup>th</sup> year after *hijrah* when he announced his intention to perform the obligatory pilgrimage. A huge number of people came to Medina to learn the ritual acts of *Ḥajj* from him and perform the same as him.”

“Then, Jābir explained about the *iḥrām*<sup>2</sup> of the Messenger of God in the Shajarah Mosque (*masjid al-shajarah*), his entrance to the Sacred Mosque (*masjid al-ḥarām*), his *ṭawāf*,<sup>3</sup> his *sa‘ī*,<sup>4</sup> and his

1. See Wāthiqī, *Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī*, pp. 50-63.

2. *Iḥrām* is the special two-piece seamless attire worn by pilgrims. When the pilgrim puts on the clothes of *Iḥrām* he also enters a state of ritual consecration during which he should abstain from certain acts, such as combing, shaving, and sexual intercourse. [Trans.]

3. *Ṭawāf* is the ritual of circumambulating the *Ka‘bah* seven times as a part of the *Ḥajj* rituals. [Trans.]

4. *Sa‘ī* involves seven laps of brisk walking or jogging between the mounts of Ṣafā and Marwah, an obligatory part of the *Ḥajj* rituals. [Trans.]

prayers. He elaborated on the arrival of Imam ‘Alī (‘a) from Yemen for the *Ḥajj* and his joining the Prophet (ṣ) in Mecca.”<sup>1</sup>

One of those who courageously exerted great effort in spreading knowledge about the merits of Imām ‘Alī (‘a) and the conduct (*sīrah*) of the Prophet (ṣ) was Jābir. He and other elites from the companions (*ṣaḥābah*) of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) repeated the Holy Prophet’s (ṣ) sermon on the day of Ghadīr Khumm to the people and did not allow [the event of] Ghadīr Khumm to be removed from the people’s memory. One time Imām al-Sajjād (‘a), Muḥammad al-Ḥanafīyyah (a son of Imām ‘Alī (‘a)), Imām al-Bāqir (‘a), and some others were in his presence. An ‘Irāqī man came and asked him to swear to God to narrate only what he saw and heard from the Prophet (ṣ). Jābir said, “We were near Juḥfah in Ghadīr Khumm and many people were gathered there from the tribes of Juhaynah, Muzaynah, Ghifār, [and others]. The Messenger of God (ṣ) came out of his tent, held up the hand of ‘Alī (‘a), and said,

”من كنت مولاه فعليّ مولاه.”

“Of whomsoever I am his master (*mawlā*), ‘Alī is also his master.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Jābir and Imām ‘Alī (‘a)**

Historians and traditionists (*muḥaddithūn*) have included Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī in the list of those who regard Imām ‘Alī (‘a) to be the first person to believe in the Holy

1. Muslim bin Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi-Sharḥ al-Nawawī*, vol. 8, pp. 170-194; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 21, p. 402.

2. *Ibid*, pp. 205-270.

Prophet (ﷺ).<sup>1</sup> Shaykh al-Mufīd<sup>2</sup> has included Jābir in the list of the companions who considered Imām ‘Alī (‘a) to be the immediate (*bilā faṣl*) successor of the Prophet (ﷺ). Then, he has enumerated the reasons why this group believed in the superiority of Imām ‘Alī (‘a) [over others].<sup>3</sup>

Shaykh al-Ṣadūq,<sup>4</sup> on the authority of a *muttaṣil*<sup>5</sup> chain of narrations (*sanad*) from Abū al-Zubayr al-Makkī, who was one of the students of Jābir, related:

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1. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 13, p. 229; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 7; Mas‘ūdī, *Al-Tanbīh wa al-Ashrāf*, p. 198.

2. Shaykh al-Mufīd is the common designation of Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Nu‘mān al-Hārithī (d. 413 AH/1022 AD). He was a great Shī‘ah jurist, traditionist and scholar of scholasticism (*‘ilm al-kalām*). Notable among his disciples were Sayyid Murtaḍā ‘Alam al-Hudā, Sayyid al-Raḍī, Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, and al-Najashī. Approximately 200 works are attributed to him, from which *Kitāb al-Irshād*, *Ikhtisāṣ*, *Awā’il al-Maqālāt*, *Al-‘Amālī*, and *Al-Maḡna‘ah* can be cited. [Refer to Shaykh al-Mufīd, *Kitāb al-Irshād: The Book of Guidance into the Lives of the Twelve Imāms*, trans. I.K.A. Howard (London: The Muhammadi Trust, 1981), Introduction, pp. xxi-xxvii; Martin J. McDermott, *The Theology of al-Shaikh al-Mufīd* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashreq, 1978), Introduction, pp. 8-45.] [Trans.]

3. Shaykh al-Mufīd, *Al-Irshād*, p. 10; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 20, p. 221.

4. Shaykh al-Ṣadūq is also known as Ibn Babūyah. He is one of the most important of the early Shī‘ah scholars who died in 381 AH/991 AD. For his short biography and works, see the introduction of Shaykh aṣ-Ṣadūq, *I’tiqādātu ‘l-Imāmiyyah: A Shī‘ite Creed*, 3rd Ed., trans. Asif A. A. Fyzee (Tehran: World Organization for Islamic Services, 1999), pp. 6-23. [Trans.]

5. *Muttaṣil* is a continuous chain of narrations (*sanad*) in which each narrator has heard that narration from his teacher. [Trans.]

“I saw Jābir roaming about in the district of the *Anṣār* and in their gatherings with a cane in his hand, and saying, ‘O *Anṣār!* Teach your children the love of ‘Alī; and, whoever rejects [this love of ‘Alī] see who his mother is.’”<sup>1</sup>

Jābir used to say, “Whoever doubts the rightfulness of the battles of Imām ‘Alī (‘a) is like the one who has doubted the rightfulness of the battles of the Prophet (ṣ).”<sup>2</sup> As such, he fought alongside Imām ‘Alī in the battles of Jamal, Ṣiffīn and Nahrawān.

He also said:

“We were in the company of the Commander of the Faithful (Imām ‘Alī) (‘a) in Baṣrah. The war had already ended and we were in the company of a group of the companions (*ṣaḥābah*), sitting and talking together at night. The Imām (‘a) came to us and asked, ‘What are you saying?’ I said, ‘We are talking about the evils of the world.’ He said, ‘O Jābir! Why do you condemn the world?!’ Then he praised and extolled God and delivered a speech about the benefits of the world. After that, he took my hand, brought me to the graveyard, and delivered a speech to those in the graves.”<sup>3</sup>

1. Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Al-Amālī*, p. 47; *Ilal al-Sharāyi*, p. 142; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 38, pp. 6-7.

2. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 32, p. 327.

3. Ḥarrānī, *Tuḥaf al-Uqūl*, pp. 186-188; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, pp. 100-101.



Sunnī writers have also reported that Jābir participated in [the Battle of] Şiffīn next to ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib.<sup>1</sup>

Jābir was also with the Commander of the Faithful (‘a) during the Battle of Nahrawān, and he has narrated an account of what happened during their return trip from this journey.<sup>2</sup>

In the book *Wāqi‘a Şiffīn*, which is one of the old books, it is narrated on the authority of Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh that the Messenger of God (ṣ) said, “Mu‘āwiyah shall die in a state where he is not a part of my community (*ummah*).”<sup>3</sup>

It is narrated that the problems and events of the time negatively affected Jābir... Then Mu‘āwiyah sent him six hundred dinars. Jābir did not accept it, and composed three lines of poetry to him. The contents are as follows, “I prefer contentment over wealth. I buy problems with my soul. I wear the garments of modesty, and instead of wealth I keep my integrity.” He then told Mu‘āwiyah’s envoy, “Tell him, ‘O son of Hind, the liver-eater! In your ‘Book of Deeds’, you shall never find a good deed written for something which you have done for me.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Jābir and Imām al-Ḥasan (‘a)**

Shaykh al-Ṭūsī narrated from Imām al-Sajjād (‘a), “One time I was walking behind my uncle Ḥasan (‘a) and my

1. Ibn ‘Abdulbirr, *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1, p. 220; Ibn Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, p. 308.

2. Shaykh al-Şadūq, *Man Lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 2323; Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 264; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 33, p. 439.

3. Naşr bin Muzāhim, *Şiffīn*, p. 217.

4. Mas‘ūdī, *Muruĵ al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 115.

father Ḥusayn ('a) in the alleys of Medina in the same year that Imām al-Ḥasan ('a) departed from this world. I had not yet reached the age of puberty. On the way, Jābir bin 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, Anas bin Mālik and a group of the Quraysh and *Anṣār* met with Imām al-Ḥasan and Imām al-Ḥusayn. Jābir impulsively threw himself in front of these two personages and kissed their hands and feet. A man of Banū Umayyah who was also in the group protested to Jābir and said, 'You act in this way considering your old age and the station you hold on account of being a companion of the Messenger of God (ṣ)?!' In reply, Jābir told him, 'Keep away from me! If you knew the merit and status of these two as I do, you would kiss their footsteps.'

Jābir then turned to Anas bin Mālik and said, 'One day the Messenger of God (ṣ) was in the mosque and his companions were gathered around him. The Prophet (ṣ) told me, 'O Jābir! Bring Ḥasan and Ḥusayn to me.' I went and summoned both of them. On the way, sometimes I carried one on my shoulder, and sometimes I carried the other until we came to the Prophet (ṣ). The Prophet, observing how I respected and loved the two, asked me, 'O Jābir! Do you love these two?' I said, 'May my father and my mother be ransomed for you! Why should I not love them when I know their status with you?!'

Then, the Prophet (ṣ) delivered a speech regarding the merits of Imām al-Ḥasan and Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a). In the end, he mentioned Imam al-Mahdī ('aj), who is a descendant of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *Al-Amālī*, pp. 500-501; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 22, pp. 110-112; vol. 37, pp. 44-46.

### **Jābir and Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)**

Several days after receiving news of the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a), Jābir bin 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī set off on a journey toward Karbalā. 'Aṭiyyah 'Awfī, his student, accompanied him on this journey. After paying homage (*Ziyārah*), he bent toward the grave and rubbed his face on it. Then, he performed four *rak'ats* (cycles) of prayer. After that, he paid homage to the grave of 'Alī Akbar, kissed his grave and performed two-*rak'ats* of prayer. Then, he paid homage to the rest of the martyrs and read a *Ziyārah* with profound words. At the end, he paid homage to His holiness Abū al-Faḍl, extended his salutations with elegant words, and performed two-*rak'ahs* of prayer.<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh al-Ṭūsī has regarded Jābir to be the first pilgrim of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a). He has mentioned the 20<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar of that year to be the day of his entrance to Karbalā.<sup>2</sup>

Sayyid bin Ṭāwūs has narrated the story of Jābir and 'Aṭiyyah's pilgrimage (*Ziyārah*) to Karbalā and quoted the *Ziyārah* which Jābir recited to the Imām ('a) and the rest of the martyrs.

### **Jābir and Imām al-Sajjād ('a)**

Shaykh al-Ṭūsī and Ibn Shahr Āshūb are among the scholars ('*ulamā'*') who considered Jābir bin 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī to be one of the companions of Imām Zayn al-

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1. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zā'ir*, pp. 286-288; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 98, pp. 329-330.

2. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid*, p. 730; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 95, p. 195.

‘Ābidīn (‘a).<sup>1</sup> Regarding his special attachment to Imām al-Sajjād (‘a), Jābir said:

“During the time when Marwān al-Ḥakam was appointed by Yazīd to be the governor of Medina, he announced to perform the ‘*Īd al-Fiṭr*’<sup>2</sup> congregational prayer in the Baqī‘ Cemetery at the end of the month of Ramaḍān. He commanded everyone to congregate there. The following morning, when it was still dark, I went out to join Imām al-Sajjād (‘a). I could see people going toward the Baqī‘ Cemetery for the ‘*Īd*’ prayer in every alley that I passed. Since they saw me going in a direction contrary to theirs, they asked, ‘Where are you going?’ I answered, ‘To the Mosque of the Messenger of God (ﷺ).’ When I entered the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ), I didn’t see anyone there except Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (‘a). The Imām was performing his obligatory dawn prayer (*ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ*), and I too performed my dawn prayer behind him. After the prayer, the Imām performed a prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*), supplicated, and I said, ‘*Āmīn*’ (amen). When the sun rose, the Imām stood facing *qiblah*,<sup>3</sup> raised his hands in front of his face, and recited a long supplication.”<sup>4</sup>

1. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *Al-Rijāl*, p. 85; *Al-Manāqib*, vol. 4, p. 176.

2. ‘*Īd al-Fiṭr*’ is the Islamic feast marking the end of the fasting month of Ramaḍān. [Trans.]

3. *Qibla* is the direction the Muslims face in times of prayers and other acts. It is where the *Ka’bah* in Mecca is located. [Trans.]

4. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Iqbāl al-‘Amāl*, pp. 285-287; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, p. 7; Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il*, vol. 6, pp. 155, 455.

### **Jābir and Imām al-Bāqir (‘a)**

Jābir said, “I heard the Messenger of God (ﷺ) say, ‘O Jābir! You will see a man from among my descendants, who is like me in name and appearance. He shall disclose knowledge. When you see him, extend my salutations to him.’”<sup>1</sup>

Falīḥ bin Abī Bakr al-Shaybānī said, “I was in the presence of Imām al-Sajjād (‘a) and his son was also present. All of a sudden, Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī came in and greeted the Imām. He took the hand of Imām al-Bāqir (‘a) and brought him to the side. Jābir told him, ‘The Messenger of God (ﷺ) informed me, ‘You shall see a man from my descendants whose name is Muḥammad bin ‘Alī and whose epithet is Abū Ja‘far. Whenever you see him, extend my salutations to him.’ This Jābir said and left.

After the sunset prayer (*ṣalāt al-maghrib*), Imām al-Sajjād (‘a) asked his son Muḥammad al-Bāqir (‘a) about his meeting with Jābir. Muḥammad al-Bāqir (‘a) repeated for his father what Jābir had said. The Imām said, ‘Congratulations on this distinction which God has given you through His Prophet! Do not inform your brothers of this lest they should hatch a plot against you like the brothers of Yūsuf (‘a) did.’”<sup>2</sup>

One day Jābir was in the presence of Imām al-Sajjād (‘a) and Imām al-Bāqir (‘a), who was then an adolescent, was with his father. Jābir told him, “O youngster! Come here.”

1. Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 469-470; Kashī, *Al-Rijāl*, pp. 41-42; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, pp. 225-226.

2. Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 304; Fayḍ al-Kāshānī, *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 2, p. 344; Majlisī, *Mir‘āt al-‘Uqūl*, vol. 3, pp. 321-322.

The Imām (‘a) came forward. Jābir said, “Go”, and the Imām went. Jābir said, “By the Lord of the *Ka’bah*, his countenance is like that of the Prophet.” Then he asked Imām al-Sajjād (‘a), “Who is this youngster?” The Imām replied, “He is my son, Muḥammad al-Bāqir.” Jābir stood up, threw himself at the feet of the Imām, and said, “May my soul be ransomed for you, O son of the Messenger of God! Accept the salutations of your father, for the Messenger of God (ﷺ) extended his salutations to you.”

Tears rolled down the cheeks of Imām al-Bāqir (‘a) and he said, “O Jābir! May peace and salutations be upon my father the Messenger of God as long as the heavens and the earth exist, and salutations be upon you [also] O Jābir who has conveyed his salutations.”<sup>1</sup>

Jābir returned to his place (sat down) and told Imām al-Sajjād (‘a), “One day the Prophet told me, ‘O Jābir! Whenever you see my son Bāqir, extend my salutations. He is my namesake and the most similar to me in appearance. His knowledge is my knowledge, and his judgment is my judgment. Seven of his descendants are God’s trustees, infallible (*m‘aṣūm*), and pious leaders. The seventh of them is Maḥdī who shall fill the earth with justice and equity just as it has been filled with injustice and oppression. Then the Messenger of God (ﷺ) recited this verse:

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْتَدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ  
وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَبِيدِينَ ﴾

1. Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Al-Amālī*, pp. 434-435; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, pp. 223-224.

“We made them imams, guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the performance of good deeds, the maintenance of prayers, and the giving of zakāt, and they used to worship Us.”<sup>1-2</sup>

### Jābir as a transmitter (rāwī) of traditions (ḥadīth)

It is stated in the book *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* that Jābir has transmitted traditions (ḥadīth) from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) on the authority of Imām ‘Alī (‘a), Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, Abū Ubaydah, Ṭalḥah, Ma‘ādh bin Jabal, ‘Ammār Yāsir, Khālīd bin Walīd, Abū Burdah Niyāz, Abū Qatādah, Abū Hurayrah, Abū Sa‘īd, ‘Abdullāh bin Anīs, Abū Jamīl Sā‘idī, Umm al-Sharīk, Umm Mālik, and Umm Kulthūm, the daughter of Abū Bakr.<sup>3</sup>

### Year of demise of Jābir

Historians have recorded and narrated the year of demise of Jābir with wide differences. For instance, they have recorded: 73 AH,<sup>4</sup> 74 AH,<sup>5</sup> 76 AH,<sup>6</sup> 77 AH,<sup>7</sup> and 78 AH.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Qur’ān*, 21:73.

2. Khazāz al-Rāzī, *Kifāyat al-Athar*, pp. 55-67; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 360; Baḥrānī, *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 3, p. 65.

3. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 42.

4. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 213; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 43.

5. Ibn ‘Abdulbirr, *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1, p. 220; Ibn Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, p. 308; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 213.

6. Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnvarī, *Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 316.

7. Ibn ‘Abdulbirr, *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1, p. 220; Ibn Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, p. 308; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 213; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 43.

***The value of walking in making the pilgrimage (ziyārah) to the shrines of the Immaculate Imāms ('a)***

There is no doubt that since long ago people from various cultures have walked in making pilgrimages to holy places and it is something usual and customary. As such, the existence of *ziyārah* in the Islamic culture walking for this pilgrimage is not something strange or unusual. The Imāms' ('a) encouragement for *ziyārah* and doing so by walking, in reality, is an encouragement to perform *ziyārah* and a reminder of the value of *ziyārah*.

'Ayyāshī narrated from Mu'āwiyah al-'Ijlī:

“I was in the holy presence of Imām Bāqir al-'Ulūm ('a) in Medina when a Khurāsānī (Iranian) came to the Imām. When I saw his wounded and dusty feet, I realized the extreme sufferings he had undergone in his journey. After the customary greetings and salutations, he said to the Imām, ‘By God! Nothing has made me leave my house and my city except my love and affection for you, the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a) of the Messenger of God (ṣ).’ In confirming the statement of this man, Imām al-Bāqir ('a) said, ‘By God! If a stone loves us, God shall raise it [on the Judgment Day] with us. God says,

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّبْكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ﴾

ذُنُوبِكُمْ ﷻ

1. Ibn Sa'ad, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5, p. 112, 221; Ibn 'Abdulbirr, *Al-Istī'āb*, vol. 1, p. 220; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Al-Iṣṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 213; Mas'ūdī, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 115.



“Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.’”<sup>1</sup>

He also says,

﴿تُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ﴾

“[The faithful are those] who love those who migrate toward them.”<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, is religion other than loving?!”<sup>3</sup>

Ḥusayn bin Ismā‘īl al-Ṣaymarī narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said, “Whoever pays homage (*ziyārah*) to the Commander of the Faithful [‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib] (‘a) by walking, God shall write one *Ḥajj* and one ‘*umrah*’<sup>4</sup>. If he returns home by foot [again], God shall write two *Ḥajj* and two ‘*umrah* for every step that he takes.”<sup>5</sup>

The name of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (‘a), was mentioned in the holy presence of Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a). A person by the name of Ibn Mārid asked the Imām, “O Abū ‘Abdullāh! What shall be the reward of someone who pays homage (*ziyārah*) to your grandfather the Commander of the Faithful (‘a)?” The Imām said, “O Ibn Mārid! Anyone who pays homage to my grandfather while knowing his rightfulness, God shall write for him an accepted (*maqbul*) *Ḥajj* and ‘*umrah* for every step he

1. *Qur’ān*, 3:31.

2. *Qur’ān*, 59:9.

3. Nūrī al-Ṭabarī, *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il*, vol. 12, p. 219.

4. ‘*Umrah* is the lesser pilgrimage to Mecca, made optionally at any time of the year other than the prescribed time for the obligatory *Ḥajj* pilgrimage. [Trans.]

5. Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 14, p. 380.

takes. O Ibn Mārid! By God, God shall not make the Fire affect the dusty feet which became dusty in paying homage to the Commander of the Faithful (‘a), whether they came walking or riding. O Ibn Mārid! Write this tradition with gold.”<sup>1</sup>

Ṣafwān al-Jammāl said:

“On a journey in the company of Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a) we arrived in Kufa. The Imām said, ‘O Ṣafwān! Let the caravan stop. Here is the place of the grave of my grandfather, the Commander of the Faithful (‘a).’ I let the Imām’s camel sit down. He dismounted, performed the major ablution (ghusl), and changed his clothes. He then removed his shoes before starting out and told me, ‘Do whatever I do.’ Then, he headed toward some white-colored hills and told me, ‘Take small steps and bow your head down. Indeed, for every step a hundred thousand good [deeds] shall be written for you and a hundred thousand sins shall be removed. Your rank shall rise up a hundred thousand times. And, the reward of a truthful (*ṣiddīq*)<sup>2</sup> and a martyr (*shahīd*)<sup>2</sup> who was slain or has departed this world shall be written for you.’ Then the Imām began to walk and I did the same. A profound tranquility enveloped me.”<sup>3</sup>

Qudāmah bin Mālik narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said:

1. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 21.

2. This alludes to the Qur’anic verse, “Whoever obeys Allah and the Apostle – they are with those whom Allah has blessed, including the prophets and the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. The best of company are they!” (*Qur’ān*, 4:69) [Trans.]

3. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 97, p. 280.

“Anyone who pays homage (*ziyārah*) to Ḥusayn (‘a) for the sake of pleasing God and not just for pleasure and amusement, nor for self-indulgence [and self-debasement], his sins shall fall aside like a garment which has been washed [and cleaned] in water. As a result, no dirt shall remain on him. And, for every step he takes, a *Ḥajj* shall be written for him. For every stride he takes, an ‘*umrah* shall be recorded for him.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥusayn bin Thuwayr narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq said:

“O Ḥusayn! Indeed, whoever leaves his house with the intention of paying homage (*ziyārah*) to the grave of Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī (‘a), if he takes a walk, for every step a good deed shall be written for him and a sin shall be removed from him until he reaches the tomb of Ḥusayn. When he reaches the tomb, God shall write his name among the righteous ones who have been saved. After finishing the observance of the etiquettes of *ziyārah* and its ritual acts, God shall write his name among the victorious ones.”<sup>2</sup>

Bashīr al-Dahhān said:

“At the end of a long conversation with Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a), he told me, ‘O Bashīr! Indeed, when a believer pays homage (*ziyārah*) to Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī (‘a) while knowing his rightfulness and takes a ritual bath (*ghusl*) in the Euphrates, for every step [he takes] an accepted *Ḥajj* and ‘*umrah*, as well as *jihād* beside the

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1. *Ibid*, vol. 98, p. 19.

2. *Ibid*, p. 143.

Prophet (ṣ) or a just Imām ('a) shall be written for him.”<sup>1</sup>

Abū Ṣāmit narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq ('a) said:

“Whoever pays homage (*ziyārah*) to the grave of Ḥusayn ('a) walking, God shall write a thousand good deeds for every step that he takes, a thousand sins shall be removed from him, and his rank shall rise a thousand times.”<sup>2</sup>

Ḥusayn bin Sa'īd has narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq ('a) was asked about the visitor (*zā'ir*) to the grave of Ḥusayn ('a). In reply, the Imām said:

“Anyone who takes a ritual bath (*ghusl*) in the Euphrates and then heads toward the sepulcher of Ḥusayn ('a) by walking, for every step he takes and every stride he makes on the ground, an accepted (*maqbul*) Ḥajj with all its ritual acts and rites shall be written for him.”<sup>3</sup>

Rufā'ah bin Mūsā has narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq ('a) said:

“Indeed, whoever heads toward the sepulcher of Ḥusayn [bin 'Alī] ('a) [with the intention of *ziyārah*] while knowing his rightfulness and takes a ritual bath (*ghusl*) in the Euphrates and comes out of the river [prior to the *ziyārah*], he is like someone who has come out of his sins. So, when he reaches the holy tomb, he shall not take a step except that God shall

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1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

write for him ten good deeds and remove ten of his sins.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥusayn bin Thuwayr narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said:

“When you pay homage (*ziyārah*) to Abū ‘Abdullāh (Imām al-Ḥusayn) (‘a), take a ritual bath (*ghusl*) in the Euphrates River and wear clean clothes. Then, walk with your bare feet. You are in the holy precinct of God and that of His Prophet. Recite *Allāhu akbar* (God is the greatest) and *Lā ilāha illallāh* (there is no god but Allah).”<sup>2</sup>

‘Alī al-Ṣā’igh has narrated that Imām al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said, “O ‘Alī! Pay homage (*ziyārah*) to Ḥusayn (‘a) and do not abandon this [practice].” ‘Alī al-Ṣā’igh said, “I asked, ‘What is the reward and recompense for his visitor (*zā’ir*)?’ The Imām said, ‘Whoever visits him, God shall write a good deed (*ḥasanah*) for every step that he takes and remove a sin, and his rank shall rise a level higher. When he reaches the sepulcher of Ḥusayn (‘a), God shall send two angels to him to write down whatever good comes from his mouth. If he wanted something which is not good for him, it shall not be recorded for him. When he returns home from his *ziyārah*, they (the two angels) shall bid farewell and tell him, ‘O Friend of God! You are forgiven. You are of the party of God (*ḥizb Allāh*), the party of His Messenger and the party of his *Ahl al-Bayt* (‘a). By God! You shall never see the Fire [of hell]

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1. *Ibid*, p. 152.

2. *Ibid*, p. 24.

with your own eyes, and the Fire too shall never see or burn you.”<sup>1</sup>

It has been narrated that Sudayr al-Şayrafī said:

“We were sitting in the presence of [Imām] Bāqir al-‘Ulūm (‘a) when a youth mentioned the sepulcher of Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a). The Imām told him, ‘A servant [of God] shall not take a step toward this sepulcher, except that a good deed is written for him and a sin is removed from him.’”<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Miskān narrated that Imām al-Şadiq (‘a) said,

“Any of our Shī‘ah (followers) who pays homage (*ziyārah*) to Ḥusayn (‘a) does not return home except that all his sins are forgiven and for every step he takes and every hand that is raised toward the sky [in supplication], a thousand good deeds shall be written for him and a thousand of his sins shall be removed, and his rank shall rise up a thousand times.”<sup>3</sup>

In the traditions of the Infallible Imāms (‘a), many effects from paying homage (*ziyārah*) to them, and to Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) in particular, are mentioned, some of which are as follows:

- On the Day of Resurrection, the Friends (*awliyā’*) of God shall pay a visit to the pilgrim (*zā’ir*).<sup>4</sup>
- On the Day of Resurrection, the pilgrim shall be saved from sin.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Ibid*, p. 25.

2. *Ibid*.

3. *Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif Islāmī*, under the word *khalīl*.

4. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 97, p. 140.

- On the Day of Resurrection, the pilgrim shall be relieved from the shocks and hardships of the [Day of] Resurrection.<sup>2</sup>
- The pilgrim shall be promised paradise.<sup>3</sup>
- The pilgrim shall be promised intercession (*shafā'ah*).
- The pilgrim shall be promised companionship and inclusion in the rank and level of the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('*a*).<sup>4</sup>
- The reward and recompense for *ziyārat* are considered to be equal to the reward for migration (*hijrah*) at the time of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).<sup>5</sup>
- The status of the pilgrim to the grave of the Prophet (ṣ) and that of Ḥusayn ('*a*) is like that of someone who visits God in His Throne.<sup>6</sup>
- Paying homage (*ziyārah*) to the grave of Ḥusayn ('*a*) is equal to twenty *Hajj* and superior to twenty '*umrah* and *Hajj*.<sup>7</sup>
- God shall give the reward of freeing a thousand slaves to the pilgrim to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('*a*).<sup>8</sup>
- If anyone pays homage to Ḥusayn ('*a*) in the middle of the month of Sha'bān, the night of '*Īd*

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1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

4. *Ibid.*, vol. 26, p. 143.

5. *Ibid.*, vol. 29, p. 143.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

7. Fayḍ al-Kāshānī, *Al-Wāfi*, vol. 14, p. 1460.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 1462.

*al-Fitr*, and the night preceding the Day of 'Arafah within one year, God shall grant him the reward of a thousand accepted *Hajj* and a thousand accepted *'umrah*, and his wishes shall be granted.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, if the pilgrim (*zā'ir*) performs the rites such as washing for pilgrimage (*ghusl al-ziyārah*), reading the recitations for washing, humbleness (*khuḍū'*) and respect (*khushū'*), wearing clean clothes, asking permission to enter (*idhn dukhūl*), kissing the threshold (*'atabah*), talking quietly, saying *takbīr*,<sup>2</sup> getting close to the shrine (*ḍarih*), facing the true *qiblah*, reading authentic (*ma'thūr*) *ziyāratnāmih*, doing the *ziyārah* ritual prayers, reading the Qur'an, having presence of heart and repenting (*tawbah*), paying respects to the shrine (*takrīm al-ḥaram*), reading the farewell *ziyārah*, changing and correcting one's attitude and behavior, following the etiquettes for bidding farewell (*wadā'*), and helping the indigents, he shall be rewarded more, God willing.

Let it not remain unsaid that among the most important etiquettes of *ziyārat* is that first of all, the pilgrim (*zā'ir*) should know the Imām (*'a*) very well and have knowledge of him. Secondly, he must follow him in theory and practice. Thirdly, he must be sincere in his *ziyārat*. Perhaps the difference in the rewards awaiting the pilgrims as mentioned in the traditions (*aḥādīth*) – sometimes, one good deed (*ḥasanah*) for every step taken and at other times, a thousand good deeds for every step taken which are mentioned – is due to the different levels of knowing

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1. *Ibid*, p. 1475.

2. *Takbīr* is saying '*Allāhu akbar*' (God is the greatest). [Trans.]



the Imām, the sincerity in the performance of the *ziyārat*, and following [the teachings of] the Imām

***Going to Karbalā on foot for the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a) in the words and deeds of the scholars ('ulamā')***

It has long been the practice of the scholars and learned men of the Islamic seminary (*al-ḥawzah al-'ilmiyyah*) of Najaf along with the general public to go from Najaf to Karbalā on foot during the *Arba'īn*<sup>1</sup> of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a). Of course, this activity is not limited to *Arba'īn* and usually, it is also done on the first and the middle of [the lunar month of] Rajab, the middle of Sha'bān, and the Day of 'Arafah, i.e. the exclusive day of *ziyārat* for Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a). But this walk during *Arba'īn* has a special glory and greatness. Also, this ceremony is not limited to the city of Najaf. In fact, people also come on foot from other cities such as Baṣrah, Nāṣiriyyah, Samāwah, Baghdad, and Ḥillā (in Iraq) and recently, from other countries such as Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, and India.

The ceremony of walking is done individually, by family, by group or by forming mourning committees. The route from Najaf to Karbalā has two main ways. One is the straight route which passes through the barren deserts of this region. Nowadays, people walk on the side of the road, and the distance is about 80 kilometers. The other route passes along the bank of the Euphrates River, and the distance is about 100 kilometers. The pilgrims of

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1. *Arba'īn* is the fortieth day after the tragic event of the killing of Imām al-Ḥusayn and his companions in Karbalā in 61 AH. [Trans.]

Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) usually choose this route, and their walk lasts for three days.

The Shī‘ah scholars have a pivotal role in guiding and encouraging those who are devoted to Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) in performing the *ziyārat*, especially during *Arba’īn*. Aside from presenting guidelines, they themselves have also undertaken this important activity.

On the basis of the tradition which describes the five signs of a believer (*mu’min*), Āyatullāh Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrizī was of the opinion that, “A person who is vigilant (*murāqib*) of his deeds must consider the 20th of Ṣafār (*Arba’īn*) to be a day of grief and mourning and try his best to pay homage (*ziyārah*) to the martyred Imām (‘a) in his tomb (*mazār*), even if it is once in his lifetime.”<sup>1</sup>

Āyatullāh Bahjat Fūmanī regarded going to Karbalā on foot during *Arba’īn* as the best opportunity to introduce Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) to the world, and he emphasized this point.<sup>2</sup>

According to Āyatullāh Shabistarī Zanjānī, going to Karbalā on foot entails many issues. He regards it as a way of expressing respect, humbleness, and obedience as well as a manifestation of honoring the signs of God (*sha‘ā’ir Allāh*).<sup>3</sup>

1. Malikī Tabrizī, *Al-Murāqabāt*, p. 85.

2. *Tabnak Website*, Āzar 29, 1392 AHS (December 20, 2013).

3. Shabistarī Zanjānī, *Ziyārat Imām Ḥusayn (‘a) bih Manzilah Yik ‘Umrah, Shafaqna*, Āzar 30, 1392 AHS.

<http://afghanistan.shafaqna.com/islam-world/item/21722>

Accessed: Mehr 18, 1394 AHS (October 10, 2015).

Āyatullāh Sayyid 'Alī Sīstānī believed that God encourages the believers to pay homage to the holy shrines so that these personages may always be remembered and exalted. He recommends observing the following points:

Among the essentials of making this *ziyārah* is that apart from remembering the sacrifices made by Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) in the way of God, the Exalted, the teachings of the pure religion such as the ritual prayers (*ṣalāt*), observance of modest dress (*hijāb*), self-reform (*iṣlāḥ*), forgiveness, tolerance and courteousness, traffic rules, and other desirable concepts must be observed. In this way, one's *ziyārat* may become a step toward self-training for the acceptance of these matters and inculcation of its effects until the succeeding *ziyārat*. Then, participation in this ceremony shall be like participating in educational gatherings by the Imām ('a).<sup>1</sup>

Āyatullāh Waḥīd Khurāsānī also recommends the pilgrims perform the *ziyārat* on behalf of the Infallibles (*ma'ṣūmīn*) ('a).<sup>2</sup>

Āyatullāh Jawādī Āmulī is of the opinion that the importance of *Ziyārat Arba'īn* is not just limited to the fact that it is one of the signs of faith (*īmān*). In fact, based on this tradition (*ḥadīth*), it belongs to the category of obligatory (*wājib*) and recommended (*mustaḥabb*) ritual prayers. In the same way that the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*) is the

1. *Āyatullāh Sīstānī Website*, Question and Answer Section.

2. Waḥīd Khurāsānī, *Bayāniyyah Āyatullāh Waḥīd Khurāsānī Darbārah Arba'īn Husaynī*, Tābnāk, Āzar 29, 1392 AHS (December 20, 2003).

<https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/366015>

Accessed: Mehr 18, 1394 AHS (October 10, 2015).

pillar of religion and *sharī'ah* (Divine law), *Ziyārat Arba'īn* and commemorating the event of Karbalā is the pillar of *wilāyah* (Divine guardianship). But, the crucial point is for us to realize how the ritual prayer and *Ziyārat Arba'īn* make a person more religious.<sup>1</sup>

The ceremony of going to Karbalā on foot was also very prevalent during the period of *marja'īyah* (supreme religious authority) of Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī (1214-81 AH).<sup>2</sup> But, after him it was slowly relegated to oblivion. Worse still, it was considered something insignificant to such an extent that the practice became limited to the indigent and poor. According to Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Ṭīhrānī, this caused Mīrzā Muḥaddith Nūrī to later on try to popularize this ceremony among the people:

“When our teacher saw this condition, he embarked on this desirable method (going to Karbalā on foot), considering it essential. On *‘Īd al-Aḍḥā*<sup>3</sup>, he would rent a burden of beast to carry the loads for travel. However, he and his fellow travelers would travel on foot. Due to his unfavorable health condition, he could not traverse the distance from Najaf to Karbalā by spending only one night on the way, as was the usual practice then. Therefore, they

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1. *Shī'ah News Website*.

2. Shaykh Murtaḍā bin Muḥammad Amīn al-Anṣārī al-Shūshtarī, known as *Murabbi al-'Ulamā'* (Teacher of the Scholars), was the preeminent jurist of his time. He was also the author of a number of well-known treatises on jurisprudence and its principles such as *Rasā'il*, *Al-Makāsib* and *Farā'id al-Uṣūl*. [Trans.]

3. *‘Īd al-Aḍḥā* or *‘Īd al-Qurbān* (Feast of Sacrifice) is the Islamic feast marking the end of the *Hajj* rituals in the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, which is associated with the offering of animals for sacrifice. [Trans.]

would spend three nights along the way. In the succeeding years due to this change, more pious people were encouraged to follow suit and it was no longer considered shameful as it had been. Some years, the number of tents and camps of the hikers would reach to thirty, and each tent would be occupied by twenty to thirty persons. In this way, this wholesome tradition was revived and became prevalent once again.”<sup>1</sup>

For ten and a half years that ‘Allāmah Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn<sup>2</sup> was in Najaf, he always performed the special visitation (*ziyārat*) on ‘*Āshūrā*’, ‘*Īd al-Adha*’, ‘*Īd al-Ghadīr*’,<sup>3</sup> the day of ‘*Arafah*’,<sup>4</sup> and *Arba’īn*. A bit prior to the journey, he would go to the bazaar to ask the forgiveness of his creditors. In this journey, a group of Islamic seminary students from Jabal ‘Āmil, Najaf and other places would join and follow him. On many

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1. Āqā Buzurg Ṭihirānī, *Nuqabā’ al-Bashar*, vol. 1, p. 349; Mukhtārī, *Sīmā-ye Farzānagān*, p. 193.

2. Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥsin Amin (1284-1371 AH) was a high-ranking Shī’ah scholar and leader from Jabal Āmil, southern Lebanon, who studied jurisprudence and its principles (*fiqh wa uṣūl al-fiqh*) with Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, Sharī’at Iṣfahānī and Āqā Riḍā Hamadānī. He had approximately 100 written works including *A’yān al-Shī’ah* which is an encyclopedia of biographies of prominent Shī’ah figures. [Trans.]

3. ‘*Īd al-Ghadīr*’ is the Islamic celebration commemorating Prophet Muḥammad’s (‘*a*) public announcement of Imām ‘Alī (‘*a*) as his successor in Ghadīr Khumm after the Farewell Pilgrimage (*ḥajj al-wadā’*) on Dhū al-Ḥijjah 18, 10 AH. [Trans.]

4. The day of ‘*Arafah*’ is the ninth day of the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, when all the pilgrims participating in the *Ḥajj* must be present in the plain of ‘*Arafah*’ outside Mecca. [Trans.]

occasions, he went on *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) in Karbalā on foot.<sup>1</sup>

Āyatullāh Malakūtī had also found many opportunities to participate in this highly spiritual ceremony, and he was usually accompanied by his students. Normally, he would traverse the distance between Najaf and Karbalā, which is approximately 12 *farsakhs*<sup>2</sup> long, in two or three days.<sup>3</sup>

In his memoirs, Ḥujjat al-Islām Sayyid 'Alī Akbar Muḥtashamī wrote:

“Apart from the common people, there were also scholars, learned men, Islamic seminary students, and even some *marāji*<sup>4</sup> such as Āyatullāh Shāhrūdī and others (until they had the ability to walk) who would also go to Karbalā in groups. The Islamic seminary (*al-ḥawzah al-'ilmiyyah*) in Najaf had some well-known and large official convoys. In these convoys, approximately forty to fifty people were permanent members, and each time other individuals would join them. Some caravans were limited and related to the family members of the *marāji* ' or to Najaf seminaries,

1. Amīn, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, vol. 10, p. 359.

2. *Farsakh*: a unit of distance equivalent to approximately 5.5 kilometers. [Trans.]

3. Malakūtī, *Khāṭirāt Āyatullāh Muslim Malakūtī*, p. 174.

4. *Marāji* ' or *Marāji* ' *al-Taqlīd* (sing. *Marja* ' *al-Taqlīd*) literally means “Sources of Imitation”. *Marāji* ' are the scholars ('*ulamā*') who have reached the position of *marja* ' *ʿiyyah* (supreme religious authority) because they possess such characteristics as justice, piety, superior knowledge, awareness and being oblivious to worldly possessions. The average people refer to them to find answers to their religious questions, and to follow their religious decrees. [Trans.]

such as the exclusive caravan for the family members of Āyatullāh Shāhrūdī or the exclusive caravan for the seminary of the Qazwīnīs. But, there were also one or two reputable convoys which many of the interested seminary students would join. One such convoy was associated with Shahīd al-Mihrāb Āyatullāh Madanī (may God have mercy on him). In view of his mystical spiritualities and ethical characteristics, many of the seminary students would try their best to join him. Another was the convoy of Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Alī Ḥalīmī Kāshānī that would start off from the Islamic seminary of the late Āyatullāh Burūjerdī (may God have mercy on him). The late Āyatullāh Shahīd Ḥāj Muṣṭafā Khomeinī (may God have mercy on him) would join this convoy in going to Karbalā.

The distance between Najaf and Karbalā by way of the main, asphalted road was approximately 80 kilometers and by way of the secondary road along the Euphrates River and palm grooves, was more than a hundred kilometers. Normally, the caravans from Najaf al-Ashraf would choose the secondary road along the river. With the exception of two or three times when I travelled individually, I always joined the caravan of Āqā Ḥalīmī in going to Karbalā. To travel individually or in a caravan, each had its own peculiarities. One good thing about travelling in a caravan was the assorted services one could enjoy such as food provisions, supplies and the transport of baggage. Meanwhile, those who were travelling individually were forced to carry their own travel provisions. It was very difficult to hike with bags in the extremely hot temperatures of Iraq. However, the caravans would

usually hire horses and carts or a big pickup truck in which the baggage and utensils of the caravan were loaded. Even if someone couldn't continue walking these transport systems would bring him to the next stop. These caravans would travel in two stages. The late Ḥāj Muṣṭafā Khomeinī would usually join Āqā Ishkavarī, Āqā Sayyid Muḥammad Bujnūrdī and other elderly individuals in Chafal.”<sup>1</sup>

Some scholars ('*ulamā*') prepared provisions for the caravans of walkers.

Among the *marāji' al-taqlīd*, the presence of Āyatullāh Sayyid Maḥmūd Shāhrūdī was known to all. It is widely known that in this ceremony, he would set off from Najaf barefooted and move toward Karbalā. The rest of the gentlemen, teachers and seminary students would follow him along the way. Whenever the ceremonies finished, most of the pilgrims would leave Karbalā by riding [an animal or a vehicle] and return to Najaf. But Āyatullāh Shāhrūdī would also travel by foot on his return to Najaf.<sup>2</sup> It is widely known that he forty times went on *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('*a*') by foot.

Āyatullāh Shahīd Madanī was also one of the scholars ('*ulamā*') who had a caravan for *ziyārat*. Ḥujjat al-Islām Dashtī narrated:

“During a year when the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah coincided with an extremely cold winter, I accompanied Shahīd Āyatullāh Madanī in going to

1. Muḥtashamīpūr, *Khāṭirāt Ḥujjat al-Islām wa al-Muslimīn Sayyid 'Alī Akbar Muḥtashamīpūr*, pp. 122-123.

2. *Ibid*, p. 175.



Karbalā from Najaf so that we could perform *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) on the day of 'Arafah. On this journey, the late Shaykh 'Alī Ḥujjatī Kermānī and the late Shaykh Aḥmad Kāfī were also in the company of Āqā Madanī. After covering some distance, we reached one of the tribal villages. An Arab man came forward to welcome Āyatullāh Madanī, pay respects to him, and invite him and his companions to his place. Since everybody, especially the chiefs and sheikhs knew him very well, holding him in high esteem, we spent the night there. We resumed our journey the following day until we reached the city of Ṭuwayrij, some 20 kilometers away from Karbalā.

Throughout the journey, wherever we stopped for rest, Āqā Madanī would read some traditions (*ḥādīth*), talk about some ethical points, and sometimes he would also initiate an academic discussion. In Ṭuwayrij he had an unusual spiritual state and began to talk. At the outset, he talked about the merits of paying homage (*ziyārat*) to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and he likened the Imām's shrine to the *Ka'bah* of hope and aspirations. Then he said, 'From here until the shrine, it is better for us to continue walking barefooted and as if in a rush (*harwalah*).'<sup>1</sup> Although he had health problem and his feet ached, he went to the front and recited the verse '*Innā al-Ṣafā wa al-Marwata min sha'ā'ir Allāh...*'<sup>2</sup> This verse is recited during the *Ḥajj* rites

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1. *Hirwalah* or *harwalah* is a special, hurried pace or quick walking short of running adopted by the pilgrims [*ḥujjāj*] in a part of the *Ḥajj* ceremony. [Trans.]

2. "Indeed *Ṣafa* and *Marwah* are among Allah's sacraments..." (*Qur'ān*, 2:158)

between [the hills of] Ṣafā and Marwah, with a hurried pace. We too followed suit. As we entered the city of Karbalā, Shahīd Madanī said, 'We must enter the shrine in this same state of fatigue and barefootedness.' He went ahead again and walked while crying 'O Ḥusayn!' We entered the shrine in such a state. This is the way the rites of *ziyārat* were led by the late Kāfī. He would also recite heart-rending poems and mourning songs and make everybody cry."

Āyatullāh Sayyid Muṣṭafā Khomeinī was also one of the scholars and teachers of the Najaf [Islamic Seminary] who had a persistent and serious presence in the ceremonies of going to Karbalā on foot. During all the days of exclusive *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) (the first and fifteenth days of Rajab, the fifteenth day of Sha'bān, the day of 'Arafah, and especially during *Arba 'īn*), he would oblige himself to go to Karbala from Najaf on foot. Sometimes along the way, the soles of his feet would swell and bleed. But with the utmost zeal and passion, he would continue walking. He would turn down the insistence of friends for him to take a ride even for a part of the way. As he approached Karbalā and looked at the dome and minarets of the shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and its blood-colored banner, tears involuntarily flowed from his eyes. He would quietly whisper the tragedy experienced by the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a), beat his head and chest, mourn and recite mourning songs.<sup>1</sup>

On this journey, he did not consider the fact that he was the son of Imām Khomeinī, a prominent *marja' al-taqlīd*. He behaved like a simple seminary student, served his

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1. Raḥīmiyān, *Ḥadīth Rūyish ...*, p. 149.

fellow travelers and did not refrain from helping them. During his travels, he would also engage in academic discussions. Āyatullāh Muḥammad Ḥasan Qadīrī said:

“One time I was in the company of Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā Khomeinī while going from Najaf to Karbalā on foot. When we reached the orchards near Karbalā, we spent the night there. Our colleagues gathered around Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā and he started to talk. Each of our colleagues was supposed to ask a question in the various fields of seminary studies and he would answer their questions. Many questions in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and its principles (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), philosophy, exegesis (*tafsīr*) of the Qur’an, mysticism (*irfān*), and ethics (*akhlāq*) were asked. This questioning continued for four hours. Without studying or needing to refer to any book, Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā answered all of their questions so completely that I was greatly surprised at how talented he was.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥujjat al-Islām Muḥtashamī also said:

“The ritual prayers were led by Āyatullāh Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā Khomeinī (*r*) in the morning, noon and night. *Du‘ā’ Tawassul* and *Ziyārat ‘Āshūrā’* were read at night after the performance of the sunset (*maghrib*) and night (*ishā’*) prayers. *Du‘ā’ Kumayl* was read and the [Karbalā] tragedy was spoken about by our colleagues if we were on the way the night before Friday. One of the distinctions of the late Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā was that he would wake up and perform the supererogatory night prayers (*ṣalāt al-layl*) every night before the call (*adhān*) to the dawn prayer (*ṣalāt al-*

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1. *Farhang Īthār wa Shahādat Website.*

*ṣubḥ*). He was an extremely genial and pleasant companion, befriending and becoming acquainted with his fellow travelers. He would try his best not to annoy anyone or let anyone be left behind. In the discussion sessions in which his fellow travelling colleagues would gather around him, everyone would talk while Ḥajj Āqā Muṣṭafā would silently whisper words in remembering God (*dhikr*). During summers, due to the intolerable extremely hot weather, we would start out after the *adhān* of *ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ* and continue moving until two or three hours after sunrise. Then, we would stop at a place where we could eat our breakfast and lunch. In the late afternoon when the weather was comparatively cooler, we would move again.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥujjat al-Islām Sayyid Taqī Durche’ī also said:

“Many times I accompanied Āyatullāh Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā Khomeinī in going from Najaf to Karbalā on foot. Sometimes we were on the way for three or four days traveling a distance of approximately twenty *farsakhs*. We would not take the paved road, in spite of its being the shortest route, because of its exposure to the sun [and the absence of shade along the way]. We would walk along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which were full of groves of datepalms. Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā would walk barefooted, even without socks. He would ask anyone who was able to recite poems about the station and greatness of Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a). When he listened to these poems, he would be so moved that due to his intense crying, his

1. Muḥtashamīpūr, *Khāṭirāt Ḥujjat al-Islām wa al-Muslimīn Sayyid ‘Alī Akbar Muḥtashamīpūr*, pp. 123, 183.

shoulders would move up and down. Hāj Āqā Muṣṭafā Khomeinī always brought a copy of the *dīwān* (collection of poetry) of Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Gharawī al-Iṣfahānī. When we reached the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which are near Karbalā, he would call me by my first name to read a portion of it. He began to cry like someone whose rage was about to explode as soon as I started to read. For several kilometers I recited poems while a group of friends, especially Hāj Āqā Muṣṭafā, cried. All of a sudden, one of our colleagues saw the dome of the holy shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and thereafter the wave of fervor and wailing among the group intensified.

We were in an unusual state. The bare, wounded and bleeding feet, thirst and hunger, under the scorching heat of the sun, and the blood-stained banner reminded us of the atmosphere of Karbalā and the noontime of 'Āshūrā. The crying was so intensified that we were all sitting and we could no longer continue walking. Interestingly enough, the people of the villages and towns along the way, especially in the village of Chafal, knew Hāj Āqā Muṣṭafā Khomeinī as the son of Āqā Khomeinī (*rh*). One time, prior to our arrival in Chafal, we became aware that about twenty people were moving toward us. As we got closer, we realized that they had come in order to welcome Hāj Āqā Muṣṭafā. The normal reception of the sheikhs and prominent figures in that area was interesting for me. All those who had come in greeting kissed the hand of Hāj Āqā Muṣṭafā, greeted the rest of us, and walked

behind Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā. We entered the *ḥusayniyyah*<sup>1</sup> of Chafal behind him and were greeted warmly. We were given food. Although Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā said, 'I have no intention of spending the night here at Chafal,' they insisted and said, 'You must stay the night here in Chafal so that we may get the reward for rendering services to the pilgrims to the holy shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a).' He accepted this heartfelt request of these sincere devotees of the Imām, and we spent the night in Chafal.

In this *ḥusayniyyah* many local people came to see Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā, and one of them was a well known preacher of Iraq who was in Chafal that night. He delivered a nice sermon and after him, a *sayyid* delivered a sermon in Arabic. In sum, spiritual fervor was high then. The following day, we ate our breakfast and left immediately. The accompaniment of the people of Chafal was more interesting than their reception. They followed and accompanied us from Chafal for a short distance."<sup>2</sup>

Another distinguished figure of the Islamic seminary of Najaf who regularly participated in this ceremony was 'Allāmah Amīnī, the author of the valuable treatise *Al-Ghadīr*. In these travels, a number of the believers accompanied him. As he would come close to Karbalā, 'Allāmah Amīnī's spiritual state would change and tears would flow from his eyes.<sup>3</sup>

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1. A *ḥusayniyyah* is a place for gathering for religious rituals, speeches, mourning ceremonies, etc. [Trans.]

2. *Dar Wādī 'Ishq*, p. 185.

3. Luṭfī, 'Allāmah Amīnī: *Jur'ah-Nūsh Ghadīr*, p. 40.

Imām Mūsā al-Ṣadr, the leader of the Shī'ah in Lebanon, was one of those who was devoted to participating in the ritual of going from Najaf to Karbalā on foot. Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Muwaḥḥid Abṭaḥī said:

“When Imām Mūsā al-Ṣadr was with us on this journey in going from Najaf to Karbalā on foot, he was in a passionate state. He was the most passionate at the time of supplication and when reciting *Ziyārat 'Āshūrā*. His eyes would become red due to his intense crying. When it was his turn to remind of the tragedy [of Karbala] and recite poems and mourning songs, he would passionately recite poems in Fārsī and eloquent Arabic about the tragedy experienced by the *Ahl al-Bayt ('a)*. When there was work to be done and for loading bags and items before departure, he would work more than the others. In light moments, he would tell jokes which had an interesting academic or ethical dimension.”<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the people's reception of the pilgrims (*zuwwār*), Āyatullāh Makārim Shīrāzī said:

“When we came to one of the guests' quarters (*muḍīf*), its owner invited us and insisted that we should be his guests and take a rest there. We explained to him that since we had only walked a little so far today that we must go a longer distance, and so we had no time for remaining there. After he had insisted and we refused, the owner who obviously had had no guests for some time and was therefore very upset, suddenly took out his knife and threatened us, ‘No guests have come for me for a long time, and you must definitely be my

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1. Abū Dharrī, *Imām Mūsā Ṣadr: Umīd Maḥrūman*, pp. 176-178.

guests!' To host a pilgrim of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) was so important and valuable for them... Of course, finally, after explaining further to him and promising him that we will perform *ziyārat* on his behalf, he permitted us to go."<sup>1</sup>

Āyatullāh Malakūtī said:

"Economically speaking, these tribes were not that well off. Each of them planted some rice along the Euphrates River. Mostly they ate rice and yogurt. They weren't able to have stew. In spite of this, they were so generous to the pilgrims of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and the seminary students, without expressing any reservations."<sup>2</sup>

Ḥujjāt al-Islām Muḥammad Ḥasan Raḥīmiyān said:

"At noon and sunset, you had to stay at whatever point you had reached and you had no right to move from there, because the owners of the groves of datepalms were standing along the way, inviting the passing pilgrims to be their guests. It was as if the dusty highway of Karbalā was a part of his home and the guests leaving at noontime or sunset without eating their lunch or dinner was a grave embarrassment to him. Sometimes when we intended to wake up at midnight to continue our journey, a village Arab would come in front of us and insist that we stay. If we refused he would threaten us and angrily pull out his gun but not to kill his guests; rather, he would hand it over to Ḥāj Āqā Muṣṭafā and say, 'If you want to

1. *Shī'ah News Website*, # 49979.

2. Malakūtī, *Khāḥirāt Āyatullāh Malakūtī*, p. 175.



leave, go. But, you must step over my corpse!’ The guests’ quarters or *muḍīf* were made out of straw and date palm leaves in the form of a tunnel with a circular ceiling. Both sides of it were open, but it was totally deterrent to both cold and warm weather. Its interior was made cool during the summer by sprinkling water on it. Usually, the head of the family or tribe would sit with the guests and the youngsters would serve them. In serving the guests, they would wholeheartedly offer the best things they had. They would slaughter a lamb, serve the cream of buffalo milk and yogurt, and bring a bowl of animal oil for each person. In sum, all of their lives and properties were offered (*waqf*) for Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) and his pilgrims.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥujjat al-Islam Sayyid ‘Alī Akbar Muḥtashamī narrated:

“Throughout the way, there were small and large villages whose inhabitants were working in cultivating, gardening, growing palm trees, and raising animals. Their palm groves, gardens and farms were irrigated from the Euphrates River by means of ‘*nā’ūr*’. Every village had a guests’ quarters (*muḍīf*). Throughout the year, especially during the season for *ziyārat*, anyone who passed by would be hosted there. The *muḍīfs* are large square-shaped rectangular spaces whose walls and ceilings are made totally from the straw of date palms. In the middle there is a fireplace. During winter, firewood was burned and tea and coffee was prepared at the same time. There were Arab carpets and cushions spread around these large rooms. The Iraqi villagers were so hospitable. They would

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1. Raḥīmiyān, *Ḥadīth Rawīsh*, p. 149.

serve the pilgrims to Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) throughout the day with tea, coffee, milk, and yogurt. At lunch and dinner, they would warmly entertain them by slaughtering a lamb and cooking food. In the middle of the way, Āqā Ḥalīmī would try to put up a tent and cook Iranian foods. But throughout the way, something would come up. Due to the extraordinary insistence of the villagers, we were forced to accept their invitations and stay in the said guests’ quarters. The caravans usually traversed the route in five to six days, but those who traveled individually arrived in Karbalā in less than three days.”<sup>1</sup>

The late Ḥujjat al-Islām Sayyid Taqī Durcha‘ī said:

“The devotion of the Iraqis to the pilgrims of Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) is worthy of consideration and appreciation. They honored all the pilgrims to Abū ‘Abdullāh (Imām al-Ḥusayn) (‘a) so much. For example, sometimes they would slaughter a lamb and cook stew for the caravan of the pilgrims. On this kind of journey, I saw beautiful scenes of the sincerity of these people. Sometimes, their village was kilometers away from the road. In spite of that, they would come to the road, bringing a big or small container of yogurt drink (*dūgh*) along with bread and cheese and offer them to the pilgrims. Or, they would burn incense. Sometimes, in spite of the distance from the road, the village women would bring their gratuitous pastry and distribute it among the travelers. In particular, to slaughter a lamb in front of the travelers was very

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1. Muḥtashamīpūr, *Khāṭirāt Ḥujjat al-Islām Sayyid ‘Ali Akbar Muḥtashamīpūr*, p. 124.

prevalent. On one of these trips, a man and a woman came to the road from their plantation on a donkey. With much insistence, they took us to their house amidst their impoverishment. Although the weather was cold, they put their room at our disposal. Without realizing the situation, we slept at night. When we woke up the following morning, we realized that the old man and woman had spent the night in one corner of the courtyard in the extreme weather. It became clear that they had only one room which had been offered to us.”<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding all the pressures and the mass murder of the pilgrims on *Arba'īn* during the Ba'ath regime in Iraq, they never succeeded in stopping this ritual of walking for the pilgrimage. Each year that has passed, this ritual has become more popular. Since the people of Iraq today experience a period of independence and freedom, day by day we are witness to the further popularization of this ritual of going to Karbala on foot for *Arba'īn*.

The presence of tens of millions of pilgrims from different classes of people from various countries is a response to Imām al-Ḥusayn's ('a) call of “*Hal min nāṣirin yanṣurunī* (Is there anyone to help me?)” which continually reverberates in the skies of history.

Of course, some have assessed the ritual of walking from a jurisprudential perspective. They have criticized it and have considered it unlawful (*ḥarām*). Some of these criticisms are the following:

1. Walking may be harmful to a person.

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1. *Dar Wādī 'Ishq*, p. 124.

2. Walking is a kind of self-abuse.
3. Men and women are mixing together on this walk.
4. It imposes huge financial expenses on the society.

In reply to these criticisms, the following has been said:

1. If the harm is not to the extent of death, there is no problem.
2. If there is a rational objective in doing something, there is no problem.
3. The mixing of sexes caused by congestion, such as the mixing of sexes during *Hajj*, the Friday congregational prayers, the *'Īd* prayers, walking for the *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a), and inside the shrine, is not unlawful (*ḥarām*) in itself. At most, it may be abominable (*makrūh*).
4. The wealth which is spent for *Arba'īn* and the *ziyārat* to Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a), such as vows (*nadhhr*) for the rituals (*sha'ā'ir*) for Imām Ḥusayn ('a), are voluntary offerings, charities, donations, and special endowments for this ceremony. No one has the right to spend the money given for religious vows for other purposes or to compel people to spend their wealth on something else.

***An analysis of the march of tens of millions on the Arba'īn of Imām Ḥusayn ('a)***

Tears and lamentation, black attire, black flags, and mourning rituals have been among the manifestations of the epic of 'Āshūrā for years. In recent years, the march of tens of millions of pilgrims for Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)

is becoming a permanent manifestation of Imām Ḥusayn's ('a) divine-human movement. It is an attempt to convey the message of the 'Āshūrā movement to the entire world, to express the determination of millions of freedom-loving and justice-seeking people to change the power hegemony, to urge all the free men and freedom-loving people of the world to take a step in fighting against arrogance (*istikbār*) and the Yazids of the time, and to respond to the call of "*Hal min nāṣirin yanṣurunī* (Is there anyone to help me?)" made by Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a), the leader of the free and freedom-loving people.

Can the presence of tens of millions of people (consisting of men and women, young and old, learned and illiterate, rich and poor, pilgrim and attendant of the shrine, from various religions (*madhāhib*) and countries all with a single slogan and banner) be explained in any way other than the love for Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and the objectives of the 'Āshūrā movement? And can it be analyzed in any way other than the context of the universal human values of the 'Āshūrā movement? Most certainly, it cannot be. As such, all those who want to analyze this event with any method or approach are unable to do so. They must not overlook the 'Āshūrā movement's elements of "love for Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)," "love for the objectives and ideals of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a)," and "love for universal human messages."

Since the motive behind this movement is religious, its positive and negative impacts must be continually noted. Its positive and constructive dimensions should be strengthened. And, its negative aspects and flaws need to be eliminated. Otherwise, it is not certain which path it

will take. Will it be at the service of the 'Āshūrā movement in the future and will it promote the Divine-human values of 'Āshūrā, or will it become a tool in the hands of politicians for the advancement of their short-term and long-term goals? In many cases, it is even used against Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and the objectives of his movement. Given this, we deem it necessary to point out certain reminders:

1. Pondering and reflecting on the messages of 'Āshūrā helps us to understand that the 'Āshūrā movement is not merely a denominational (Shī'ah) or even religious movement. In fact, it is a Divine-human movement. Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) belongs to all the Muslims and to all free people and freedom-loving people of the world. As such, those who are in charge of helping the 'Āshūrā march and the pilgrims to the shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) must be aware of the divisive plots of the enemies. They need to seriously refrain from insulting others for their beliefs and views. Also, they should be conscious of the fact that Imām al-Ḥusayn's ('a) call "*Hal min nāṣirin yanṣurunī* (Is there anyone to help me?)" was meant for all the free and freedom-loving people, including the Shī'ah, Sunnī, Christians, and others.

2. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) used the *Hajj* pilgrimage for the propagation of Islam, to foster unity among the Muslims, and to give religious and sociopolitical insight to the Islamic *ummah*. However, due to the fact that Mecca and Medina are currently under the control of the Wahhābīs,<sup>1</sup>

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1. A *Wahhābī* is a follower of Muḥammad bin 'Abdulwahhāb, the founder of the Wahhābī sect. For a critical review of Wahhabism,

and that this opportunity has been taken away from the Muslims, one must maximize the potential of these tens of millions and formulate suitable cultural and propagational programs for the promotion of the real Islam of the Prophet (ﷺ) and for fostering Islamic unity.

3. The followers (*muqallidīn*) of the esteemed *marāji' al-taqlīd* (supreme religious authorities) must know that this movement is pursuant to that of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) and it is not confined to any one *marjā' al-taqlīd*. As such, any movement that would incite division and dissension needs to be avoided. For instance, it is unnecessary for the followers of a *marja' al-taqlīd* to carry his picture. Or, it is not compulsory that the representative of a certain *marja' al-taqlīd* lead the group ritual prayers (*ṣalāt*) in the shrines of Karbalā. Or, there is no need to distribute the *risālah al-'amaliyyah* (treatise on practical laws) of a *marja' al-taqlīd* during the march.

4. *Husaynī* passion (*shūr*) without *Husaynī* common sense (*shu'ūr*) can cause great damage. Of course, if the passion is coupled with reason, it will be very constructive and productive. The *Husaynī* passion and reason demand that we should not engage in Arab-Persian conflicts or intertribal rivalries, for these are destructive and counterproductive.

5. Those who are in charge of affairs must strive hard to create outward and inward security and know that no

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see Āyatullāh Ja'far Ṣubḥānī's book, *Wahhabism*, Naba' Organization, Tehran, 1996. <http://www.al-islam.org/wahhabism>  
Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, Islamic Publications International, New York, 2002. [Trans.]

amount of laxity or negligence on their part is acceptable before God and Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a).

6. It is true that the pilgrims have accepted the fact that for making this pilgrimage they must endure troubles and difficulties, and that the more hardship they experience, the more they will gain spiritual reward (*thawāb*). But, this does not mean that those who are in charge may be negligent in rendering services, especially in matters pertaining to health and hygiene.



## ARBA‘ĪN IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY

اربعین آمد

*Arba‘īn Came*

by Šābir Burūjirdī

اربعین آمد و اشکم ز بصر می آید

*Arba‘īn came and tears flow from my eyes.*

گویا زینب محزون ز سفر می آید

*Apparently, the mournful Zaynab comes from a journey.*

باز در کرب و بلا شیون و غوغا برپاست

*Once again, there is crying and uproar in Karbūbalā,<sup>1</sup>*

کز اسیران ز ره شام خبر می آید

*As news about the captives comes from the way to Shām.<sup>2</sup>*

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1. *Karbūbalā* or *Karb wa Balā*: This is the origin of the word *Karbalā* which literally means “agony and tragedy”. [Trans.]

2. *Shām* is the territory that included the Syria of today, Lebanon and parts of Jordan and Palestine up until five centuries ago. Damascus was then the capital of *Shām* and the Umayyad caliphate. This was where the *Ahl al-Bayt* (‘a) were taken as captives after the tragedy in *Karbalā*. [Trans.]

جرس از سوز جگر نالد و گوید به ملاء

*The bell groans from the groaning pain of the liver and tells the public*

که سکینه به سر قبر پدر می آید

*That Sakīnah<sup>1</sup> comes to [her] father's grave.*

گرچه پایش بود از خار مگیلان مجروح

*Although her feet were wounded by the sweet lote's thorns,*

بر سر قبر پدر باز به سر می آید

*She comes again to the grave of her father.*

ای صبا گوی به عباس که از جا برخیز

*O zephyr! Tell 'Abbās to rise up.*

امّ کلثوم تو خم گشته کمر می آید

*Umm Kulthūm<sup>2</sup> is coming to you bent over.*

"صامتاً" از چه نگفتی که سر قبر پدر

*O you who are silent! Why did not you tell me that to the father's grave*

با سرشك مژه امروز پسر می آید

*The son is coming with tears pouring from his eyelashes?*

1. Sakinah was a young daughter of Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a). [Trans.]

2. Umm Kulthūm was Imām al-Ḥusayn's ('a) sister. [Trans.]

***From Arba‘īn to Arba‘īn***

by Sayyid ‘Alī Aṣghar Mūsawī

اربعین تا اربعین، صد قافله مهمان توست

*From Arba‘īn to Arba‘īn, a hundred convoys are your guests.*

معرفت جوی حریم عشق بی پایان توست

*Seeking Divine knowledge is the confines of your everlasting love.*

اربعین تا اربعین، صد پیر با جابر قرین

*From Arba‘īn to Arba‘īn, a hundred aged people will join Jābir.<sup>1</sup>*

با تو می گیرد به یاد اربعینت، اربعین

*Your fortieth is remembered with you, oh Arba‘īn .*

با تو می گیرد عزا همراه فرزندان، خلیل

*Along with [his] sons, Khalīl<sup>2</sup> shall mourn you.*

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1. This refers to Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, a companion (ṣaḥābī) of the Prophet (ṣ) known to be the first one to pay homage to the grave of Imām al-Ḥusayn (‘a) in Karbalā and who lived for over a hundred years. [Trans.]

2. Khalīl refers to Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (‘a) whose well known title is *Khalīl Allāh* which means ‘the Friend of God’. [Trans.]

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، همراه خاتم، جبرئیل

*Along with the Seal [of the Prophets], the [Archangel] Gabriel shall mourn you.*

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، معصومه خلقت، بتول

*Batūl,<sup>1</sup> creation's immaculate one, shall mourn you.*

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، هم عترت آل رسول

*The progeny of the Messenger's Household also mourn you.*

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، در اربعین

*You shall be mourned on Arba 'īn.*

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، در اربعینت مرتضی

*You shall be mourned on your Arb 'īn, Murtadā.*

با تو می‌گیرد عزا، تا جلوه روز جزا

*You shall be mourned till the manifestation of the Day of Judgment.*

خیمه برپا کرده با یادت، غمین بانو رباب

می‌کند همراه زینب، هم دل عالم، کباب

در شهودی آشکارا، جلوه گر از مشرقین

آسمان پر می‌شود از بانگ ذکر یا حسین

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1. Batūl is one of the titles of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' ('a), the Holy Prophet's (s) daughter, which means 'virgin'. [Trans.]

یا حسین و یا حسین، آهنگ دلها می شود  
سینه سینه این نواها تا کجاها می رود  
ای مسیر کاروانت تا ابد، آینه پوش  
نغمه تنهایی ات می آید از میدان به گوش  
آن که در شط فرات از دست، خالی کرد آب  
مهر تو در سینه اش بود از ازل، با بوتراب  
شوق و ذوق اکبر و قاسم، از انفاس تو بود  
جلوه آینه هاشان، عشق و احساس تو بود  
جرعه ای از جام صبرت حضرت زینب چشید  
لحظه ای حتی از او درماندگی دشمن ندید  
غیرت مردان حق، از حق آیین تو بود  
هر چه بود آن جا، فقط آینه دین تو بود

***Testimony of Love***

**[On behalf of Lady Zaynab ('a)]**

by Sayyid Riḍā Mu'īd

به کربلای تو یک کاروان دل آوردم

*I have brought to your Karbala a caravan of hearts.*

امانتی که تو دادی، به منزل آوردم

*The trust which you left in my possession, I am bringing back to you.*

هزار بار به دریای غم فرو رفتم

*I have drowned a thousand times in the sea of sadness.*

که چند دُرّ یتیمت به ساحل آوردم

*So that I could save a few of the orphans as precious as pearls.*

کبوتران حرم را ز چنگ صیادان

*The pigeons of your shrine which I have saved from the predators.*

نجات داده و چون مرغ بسمل آوردم

*But, I bring them to you in a weakened state.*

به جز رقیه که از پا افتاد پیش سرت

*Except for Ruqayah who collapsed by your head.*

تمام اهل حرم را به منزل آوردم

*I have brought all the members of your family home.*

شبی به محفل ویران ما سرت شد شمع

*One night in our dark camp, your beloved head was the only light that we had*

حدیث ها من از آن شمع و محفل آوردم

*I have brought tales from that light and camp*

گزارش سفرم از دل شکسته پیرس

*Ask my broken heart for the tale of my journey.*

کزین سفر خبر فتح کامل آوردم

*That it is from this journey I have brought a complete victory.*

اگر به سلسله بستند بازوی ما را

*Even though they had tied us in chains.*

حیات خصم تو را در سلاسل آوردم

*I have imprisoned the life of your enemy.*

نظر به جسم کبودم نما که دریایی

*Look at my bruised body oh you who are like the ocean.*

تنی رها شده از چنگ قاتل آوردم

*I have brought you a body freed from the clutches of the ruthless murderers.*

***A Chronicle of a Journey in Captivity***

by Sayyid Riḍā Mu'īd

ز کویت با دلی پر غصه زاری کردم و رفتم

*I passed your alley with a heart full of sorrow, I cried and left.*

به کوه و دشت صحرا، بی قراری کردم و رفتم

*Towards the mountains and desert plains I left with so much agony.*

چو دشمن در برت ما را نداد اذن عزاداری

*For your enemy didn't allow us to mourn beside you.*

به هر منزل رسیدم، سوگواری کردم و رفتم

*Each place that we halted, we mourned for you and left.*

ز بس در راه شام و کوفه خون از دیده باریدم

*On the way to Damascus and Kufa I shed tears of blood.*

چو گلشن طول ره را لاله کاری کردم و رفتم

*The entire way it was as if I planted a garden of red tulips.*

مبین اکنون که من محمل نشین آیم گه رفتن

*Don't look at the way I came riding on a camel.*

مکان بر اشتران بی عماری کردم و رفتم

*Even though they took us from here without any camels.*

به هر جا محمل افکندم ز طفلان حال پرسیدم



*I asked the children how they were wherever we stopped.*

به وقت کوچ از آنان سرشماری کردم و رفتم

*Each time we started out again I counted them and we left.*

به میدان شهادت گر که نتوانستمی جهدی

*Although I couldn't fight and be a martyr in the battle.*

به پیکار اسارت، جان نثاری کردم و رفتم

*But, as a prisoner I gave my life along the way, and we left.*

به پیش دیده نامحرمان ای محرم زینب

*Before the eyes of the Nāmaḥramān<sup>1</sup>, oh Maḥram<sup>2</sup> of Zaynab.*

ز آل الله به غیرت پرده داری کردم و رفتم

*I protected the dignity of the Household of God, and we left.*

تو مقتول از جفا گشتی که ظالم ریشه کن گردد

*You were murdered in anguish so that oppression may be eliminated.*

همی من از اسارت بر تو یاری کردم و رفتم

*I helped you with my captivity and left.*

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1. *Nāmaḥramān* are the people before whom the women must cover the Islamic dress. [Trans.]

2. A *Maḥram* is someone who is close family and therefore there is no need for a Muslim woman to wear the Islamic dress when with them. [Trans.]

به پیش ظالمان با تیغ نطق و قدرت تقوا

*I went before the oppressors with the sword of speech and the strength of piety.*

به میدان شهامت پافشاری کردم و رفتم

*I stood up to them with bravery and persistence, and left.*

ز بن ویرانه کردم پایگاه ظلم دشمن را

*I turned the enemy's foundation of oppression into ruins.*

بنای عدل را بنیان گذاری کردم و رفتم

*I laid the foundation of justice, and left.*

*Arba'īn the Red Flower*

by Aḥad Dihbuzurqī

اربعینی چو گذشت از گل سرخ  
سر بر آورد ز گل، سنبل سرخ  
سبز شد کشته بر زیگر عشق  
ثبت شد نام پیام آور عشق  
کمر دیو ستم پیشه شکست  
کاخ بیداد گر از ریشه شکست  
دفتر عشق، ز خون امضا شد  
قاتل خون خدا رسوا شد  
بلبلان از قفس آزاد شدند  
خارج از مجلس بیداد شدند  
جوش زد خون شقایق در خاک  
غنچه لاله گریبان زد چاک  
سند عشق، ز خون کامل شد  
کربلا کعبه اهل دل شد

جابر آن حق نگر روشندل  
عاشق عارف و پیر کامل  
تا کند طوف مزار گل سرخ  
گشت عازم به کنار گل سرخ  
با سر و پای برهنه برخاست  
قامت از بهر زیارت آراست  
با تحیات و سلام و صلوات  
زد قدم بر شط خونین فرات  
جامه ای پاک و معطر پوشید  
کفی از آن شط جوشان نوشید  
چون تن و جامه خود خوشبو کرد  
به سوی کعبه دلها رو کرد  
آمد و آمد و آرام آرام  
کرد در پایگه عشق، مقام  
خم شد و تربت گل را بوسید  
از جگر نعره یا دوست کشید

گفت ای دوست، حبیب دل من  
پیر عشاق، طیب دل من

جابرم، جابر دلداده تو  
عاشق خسته آزاده تو

از چه ای دوست جوابم ندهی  
پاسخ قلب کبابم ندهی

بر کشید آهی و از پا افتاد  
چهره بر تربت محبوب نهاد

گفت: ای سید پاکیزه سرشت  
سرور خیل جوانان بهشت

ای جگرگوشه زهرای بتول  
پاسخی ده به من زار ملول

چون جوابی نشنید آن دلریش  
زد زغم دست عزا بر سر خویش

گفت: هرگز نشنیدم به جهان  
تن بی سر سخن آرد به میان

وای بر من چه تقاضا دارم؟  
از چه رو خواهش بیجا دارم؟

*Arba'īn the Path of Blood*

by Sayyid 'Alī Aṣghar Mūsawī

بسوز ای دل که امروز اربعین است  
عزای پور ختم المرسلین است  
مرام شیعه در خون ریشه دارد  
نگهبانی ز خط خون چنین است  
به یاد کربلا دل ها غمین است  
دلا خون گریه کن، چون اربعین است  
حسین بن علی سالار دین است  
امام و رهبر اهل یقین است  
حسین است آن که با حق همنشین است  
خدا را محب و دین را امین است  
حسین است آن که در خط شهادت  
امام اولین و آخرین است  
اگر در کربلا غم بی شمار است  
اگر دل های شیعه داغدار است

اگر چشمان مهدی اشکبار است  
ز داغ آن وداع آخرین است  
پیام خون خطاب آتشین است  
بقای دین، رهین اربعین است  
دیار شام با غم ها قرین است  
قلوب شیعیان زان غم حزین است  
مزار زینب و قبر رقیه  
تجلی گاه عشق عارفین است  
به یاد کربلا دل ها غمین است  
دلا خون گریه کن چون اربعین است  
شهادت چون حیات جاودانی است  
میان مرگ ها، زیباترین است  
جهاد حضرت سجاد و زینب  
بیان خطبه های آتشین است  
اگر جمع شهیدان حلقه باشند  
حسین بن علی آن را نگین است



*Caravan of Arba'īn*

by 'Abdul'alī Nigārandih

به نام آن که دائم گفت و گوی کربلا دارد  
دلی چون جابر، اندر جستوجوی کربلا دارد  
دلش چون کربلا کوی حسین است و نمی داند  
که همچون دوردستان آرزوی کربلا دارد  
به یاد کاروان اربعین، با گریه می گوید  
به هر جا هست زینب، رو به سوی کربلا دارد  
اگر چه برده از این سرزمین آخر دلی پر خون  
ولی دل بستگی از جان به کوی کربلا دارد  
به یاد آن لب تشنه، هنوز این عاشق خسته  
به کف جامی لبالب از سبوی کربلا دارد  
اگر دست قضا مانع شد از رفتن به پابوسش  
همی بوسیم خاکی را که بوی کربلا دارد  
اگر خاک رهش بنشست بر روی گنه کاری  
گرامی می شود، چون آبروی کربلا دارد

*The Gift of the Caravan*

by Muḥammad ‘Alī Mujāhidī

آنچه از من خواستی با کاروان آورده ام  
یک گلستان گل به رسم ارمغان آورده ام  
از در و دیوار عالم فتنه می بارید و من  
بی پناهان را بدین دارالآمان آورده ام  
اندرین ره از جرس هم بانگ یاری برنخاست  
کاروان را تا بدین جا با فغان آورده ام  
تا نگوئی زین سفر با دست خالی آمدم  
یک جهان درد و غم و سوز نهان آورده ام  
قصه ویرانه شام از نپرسی خوش تراست  
چون از آن گلزار، پیغام خزان آورده ام  
تا به دست نینوا بهرت عزاداری کنم  
یک نیستان ناله و آه و فغان آورده ام  
تا نثارت سازم و گردم بلاگردان تو  
در کف خود از برایت نقد جان آورده ام  
تا دل مهرآفرینت را نرنجانم ز درد  
گوشه ای از درد دل را بر زبان آورده ام

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