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Arbaeen of Imam Husayn

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What follows in this piece is a brief look at the “Arba‘een” [the commemoration of 40 days after the tragic events of Karbala] of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him. The article concludes with the Arabic text of Ziyarat Arba‘een with full English translation and a brief exposition on certain passages of this powerful and moving visitation. Insha-Allah, a more comprehensive understanding of this ziyarat will be presented in the future.

Author(s):

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Arbaeen of Imam Husayn

By Shaykh Saleem Bhimji

www.al-mubin.org [13]

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*****

There are very few mass gatherings in the world today which are entire peaceful and which do not result in the loss of life, and in fact, according to Wikipedia – "the Free Encyclopedia" - of the five gatherings globally seeing over 10 million people, four were in Karbala:

1. An estimated 21 million people visited the shrine of Imam Hussein in Karbala, Iraq during Arba'een on 14 January 2012.

2. An estimated 15 million people visited the shrine of Imam Hussein in Karbala, Iraq during Arba'een in 2011.

3. An estimated 15 million people attended the funeral of C. N. Annadurai in Tamil Nadu, India in 1969.

4. An estimated 10 to 14 million people visited the shrine of Imam Hussein in Karbala, Iraq during Arba'een in 2010.

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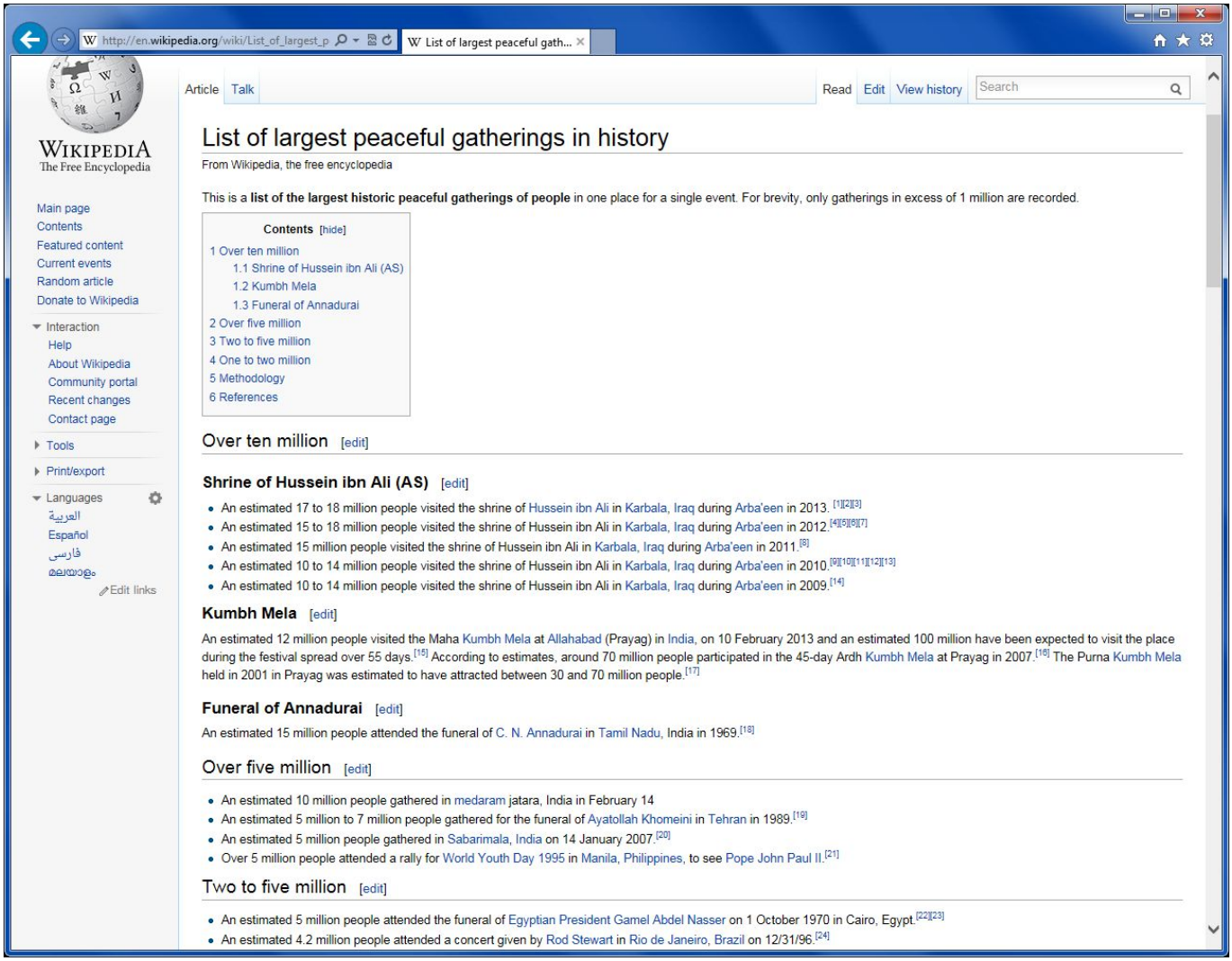

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List of largest peaceful gatherings in history

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This is a **list of the largest historic peaceful gatherings of people** in one place for a single event. For brevity, only gatherings in excess of 1 million are recorded.

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Shrine of Hussein ibn Ali (AS) [edit]

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Kumbh Mela [edit]

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- An estimated 4.2 million people attended a concert given by Rod Stewart in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 12/31/96.[24]

Why is there such a fervent desire for millions to flock to what would have been an otherwise unknown land and for millions to journey there by foot from all parts of the world? This brief article will touch upon the spiritual significance of *Arba'een* as seen in the Noble Qur'an and Islamic narratives as well as a short commentary on the *Ziyarat* of *Arba'een*.

The sayings of the Infallibles, peace be upon them all, have emphatically guided the believers to be present in Karbala to mark the 40th day after the tragedy of Karbala and in fact, the 11th successor to the Noble Prophet of Islam, Imam Hasan al-Askari, peace be upon him, has actually considered this act as being one of the clear and apparent signs of a true believer when he said:

علامات المؤمن خمس: صلاة إحدى وخمسين، وزيارة الأربعين، والتّختّم باليمين، وتعفير الجبين و جهر ببسم الله الرحمن الرحيم.

The signs of a true believer are five:

1. *51 rak'at of Salat (per day – 17 of which are the obligatory prayers and 34 which are the*

recommended daily prayers)

2. *Ziyarat Arba'een;*

3. *Wearing a ring on the right hand (an Aqeeq ring);*

4. *Placing the head on the earth (during sajad in the Salat);*

5. *Openly pronouncing* **"بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم"** *(Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem) when reciting the two surahs in the Salat.*

The *Ziyarat Arba'een* which we recite in Karbala (and indeed from our homes if we are not fortunate enough to be in Karbala on the 20th of Safar) has been narrated from a companion named Safwan al-Jammaal from Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, in which the Imam told him to visit Imam Husayn and to recite a specific visitation formula on the afternoon of the *Arba'een*.

Although there are differences of opinion concerning the date of the *Arba'een-e-Husyani* - was it in the year 61 AH after the massacre in Karbala, or was it the following year? Whatever the opinion is, the fact remains that the visitation of the blessed grave of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, and his noble family and friends on the day of *Arba'een* is extremely important and is something which each and every true believer will try and perform during his lifetime.

The first such visitation took form when Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari paid his respects to Imam Husayn, peace be upon him. Jabir was a well-known companion of the Prophet whom all Muslims love and respect; and he had witnessed may wars and battles alongside the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, and he has narrated many *ahadith* and in fact, he was so loved by the Messenger that the Prophet would often go and visit him personally!

On one such meeting, Jabir asked his wife that when the Prophet comes that she should not ask him any questions. She narrates that when the Prophet came to their house, she did as she was asked and when Jabir met him, he said: "O Messenger of Allah! Prayers from myself and my wife are upon you!" The Prophet replied, "Prayers of Allah be upon you and your wife!"

Indeed Jabir had heard numerous sayings from the Prophet in relation to the status of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him and he indeed fully understood the lofty status of both grandsons of the Prophet – namely Imam al-Hasan and al-Husayn as carried by the blessed heart of al-Mustafa, and therefore it is of no amazement that he was the first companion, despite his old age, who made the journey to Karbala after he heard of what had happened to the beloved grandson of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

Al-A'mash narrates from 'Atiyyah al-'Awfi, who said: "I left with Jabir ibn 'Abdillah al-Ansari, may Allah have mercy on him, to visit the grave of al-Husayn bin 'Ali bin Abi Talib peace be upon him; and when we entered Karbala, Jabir came near the bank of River Euphrates, performed the major ablution *(ghusl)* and wore his clothes; then he opened his purse which contained *su'd* [a plant with sweet fragrance]. He spread the perfume over his body; thereafter he did not take a step save in the remembrance of Allah, until he neared the grave [of al-Husayn, peace be upon him]."

[Then] he said to me: "Make me touch the grave, and I made him do so. Thereupon he fell

over the grave unconscious."

I sprinkled some water on him, and he gained consciousness.

Then he cried three times:

يا حُسين، يا حُسين، يا حُسين....

Ya Husayn … Ya Husayn … Ya Husayn

Addressing al-Husayn, peace be upon him, he said: "Why is the beloved not responding to the call of the lover? But how can you respond, while your veins have been severed, and your body has been separated from your head?

I bear witness that you are the offspring of the Prophets, and the son of the master of believers, and the offspring of the companion of piety, and the offspring of guidance, and the fifth member of the people of the cloak, and the son of the master of the chiefs, and the son of Fatimah, the mistress of the women; how can you not be so, while the hand of the Leader of the Apostles, peace be upon him and his family, fed you, and you were breast-fed from the breast of belief, and trained in the bosoms of pious people, your weaning accompanied the state of utter submission.

Hence you enjoyed a pleasant state both during your life time and after your death; however, the hearts of the believers are sorrowful due to your separation, and do not doubt about your great position. So upon you be Allah's Peace and Approval. And I bear witness that you faced what your brother [Prophet] Yahya, peace be upon him, had faced."

Thereafter Jabir felt the presence around the grave and said: "Peace be upon you and the spirits that have descended in the neighbourhood of al-Husayn, peace be upon him … I bear witness that you were steadfast in your prayers and gave the *zakat* and you commanded the good and prohibited the forbidden and struggled against the deniers of religion and you worshipped Allah until conviction came to you. I swear by the One Who sent Muhammad as a Prophet with truth; surely we participated with you in what you encountered."

'Atiyyah (not understanding this powerful statement made by Jabir) says: I asked Jabir: "How can that be possible, while we did not descend on any valley, nor did we climb any mountainous area, nor did we fight with the sword, whereas the heads of the group of al-Husayn, peace be upon him, have been separated from their bodies, their children were made orphans and their women were made widows?"

Jabir said: "O 'Atiyyah, I heard from my beloved, the Apostle of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, say: 'Whosoever loves a nation, will be resurrected with them, and whosoever loves the deed of a nation, will be considered one who has participated in that deed (with them). I swear by the One Who Sent Muhammad as a Prophet in truth, surely my intention and the intention of my companions is according to the intention of al-Husayn and his companions."

[Then Jabir said to 'Atiyyah]: "Take me towards the houses of Kufa."

‘Atiyyah says: “When we reached a certain point on the way, Jabir said to me: ‘O ‘Atiyyah, may I advise you, for I do not think that I will meet you after this short journey? Love the lover of Aale Muhammad as long as that person loves them, and have aversion for one who has aversion for Aale Muhammad as long as that person has aversion for them; for if a person was to fast and stand in prayer frequently and befriend the lover of Aale Muhammad, then surely if one of their feet was to slip due to excess of sin, the other foot would be firm due to love of Aale Muhammad, for verily the lover of Aale Muhammad would return to Paradise and the one who has aversion for them will return to the Hell Fire.’”

Does the number 40 have any significance?

It is very much possible that the visitation of Jabir on the 20th of Safar was “by chance” or a “coincidence” and that the 40th has/had no significance and because he reached there on the 20th of Safar that we now too mark this day – or it could be that this day actually does have some mystical and spiritual importance?

In fact, there is spiritual significance to some numbers and this is seen in the Qur’an and the traditions such that the number 40 is repeated in many places of the Qur’an:

وَإِذْ وَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمّ اتّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

“And when We appointed a time of forty nights with Musa, then you took the calf (for a god) after him and you were unjust.” (Suratul Baqarah, 2: 51)

قَالَ فَإِنّهَا مُحَرّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“He said: So it shall surely be forbidden to them for forty years, they shall wander about in the land, therefore do not grieve for the nation of transgressors.” (Suratul Maidah, 5:26)

وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتْمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمّ مِيقَاتُ رَبّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِلأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ اخْلُفْنِي فِي قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

“And We appointed with Musa a time of thirty nights and completed them with ten (more), so the appointed time of his Lord was complete forty nights, and

Musa said to his brother Haroun: Take my place among my people, and act well and do not follow the way of the mischief-makers." (Suratul A'raaf, 7:142)

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

"And We have enjoined on man doing of good to his parents; with trouble did his mother bear him and with trouble did she bring him forth; and the bearing of him and the weaning of him was thirty months; until when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years, he says: My Lord! grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favor which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee and do good to me in respect of my offspring; surely I turn to Thee, and surely I am of those who submit." (Suratul Ahqaf, 46:15)

In addition, there are numerous traditions which mention the number "40" such as the following:

عن رسول الله (صلى الله عليه و آله و سلام): إنّ الأرض لتبكي على المؤمن أربعين صباحاً.

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, has said: *"Indeed the Earth laments over the death of a true believer for the period of 40 days."*

عن الإمام محمد الباقر (عليه السلام) أنّه قال: إنّ السّماء بكت على الحسين أربعين صباحاً.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, peace be upon him, has said: *"Indeed the sky lamented over the death of al-Husayn for a period of 40 days."*

عن الإمام الصّادق(عليه السلام) أنّه قال: إنّ السّماء بكت على الحسين أربعين صباحاً بالدّم، والأرض بكت عليه أربعين صباحاً

بالسّواد، والشّمس بكت عليه أربعين صباحاً بالكسوف والحمرة، والملائكة بكت عليه أربعين صباحاً، وما اختضبت امرأة منّا ولا ادّهنت ولا اكتحلت ولا رجّلت حتّى أتانا رأس عبيد الله بن زياد وما زلنا في عبرة من بعده.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, said: *"The heavens cried for forty days with blood (weeping) over Imam Husayn; the earth cried for forty days by being covered with darkness; the sun cried for forty days by being in eclipse and turning red; the mountains were torn apart and dispersed; the seas gushed out and the angles cried for forty days over him. After Imam Husayn's martyrdom, all of our women stopped colouring their hair, using kohl, applying oil, and styling their hair until the head of Ubaydullah ibn Ziyaad was sent to us; and even after that we (all) continued to weep over him."*

In summary, this all points to the reality that there is "something" contained in the visitation to Karbala 40 days after the tragic massacre of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him and his family, as the "40th" is not marked for any other Imam nor is it marked for any other Prophet – and perhaps if we are given the Divine Providence (tawfeeq) to be in Karbala on the 20th of Safar to pay our respects and condolences to the Prophet and the noble family on the supreme sacrifice offered on the 10th of Muharram 61 ah, then we may be able to benefit from the spiritual bounties contained in this spiritual journey to reach our Beloved.

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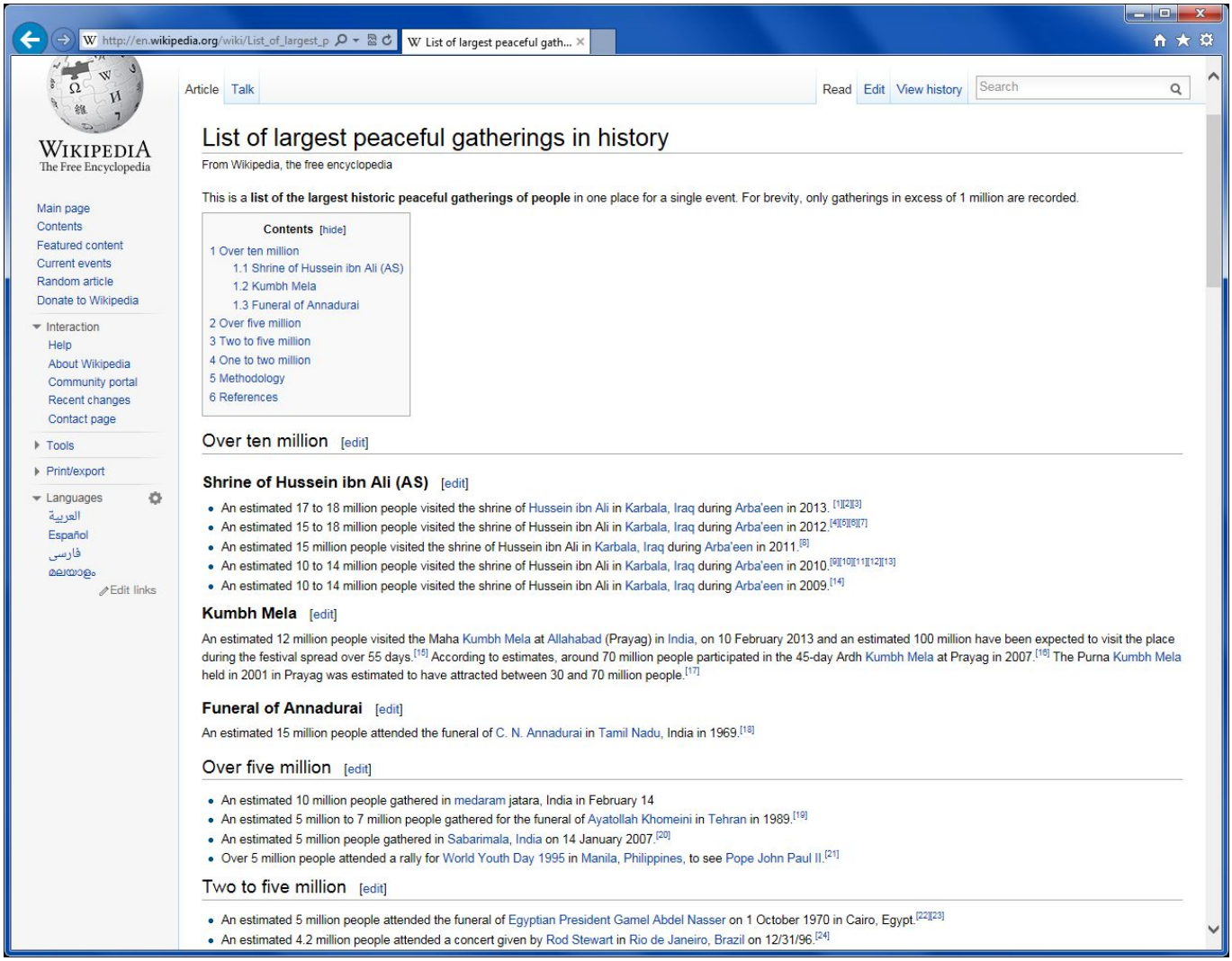

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Ziyarat Arbaeen

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Benefecient, The Merciful

Part One

Sending our greetings of peace, prayers and salutations upon the Master of the Martyrs

أَلسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ وَلِيِّ اللهِ وَحَبِيبِهِ،

Peace be upon the intimate friend of Allah, and His beloved!

أَلسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ خَلِيلِ اللهِ وَنَجِيبِهِ.

Peace be upon the close friend of Allah, and His confidant!

أَلسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ صَفِيِّ اللهِ وَابْنِ صَفِيِّهِ

Peace be upon the choicest confidant of Allah, and the son of the choicest confidant [of Allah].

أَلسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ الْحُسَيْنِ الْـمَظْلُومِ الشَّهِيدِ،

Peace be upon Husayn, the oppressed, the martyr.

أَلسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ أَسِيرِ الْكُرُبَاتِ وَقَتِيلِ الْعَبَرَاتِ

Peace be upon the hostage surrounded by the tightening circle of sorrow and grief, killed by a horde of savages.

Explanation

In the introductory salutations of the *ziyarat*, Imam as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, discusses the spiritual lineage of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and mentions that he is the son of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family – the one who is the most beloved to Allah. Some of the Prophets of Allah are referred to by their titles which they are well-known by; Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, who is known as the Friend of Allah; Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, who is known as the one who spoke to Allah; Prophet Isa, peace be upon him, who is the Word of Allah; Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, who is the Prophet of Allah – keeping in mind that he (Prophet Nuh) was the first one to attain the status of *nubuwwah*; Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, who was the Chosen of Allah and finally, Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, who is the Most Beloved of Allah.

In regards to the phrase “Peace be upon you” (السلام عليك) - many different meanings have been given:

1. *As-Salam* (The Peace) is one of the names of Allah, the Grand and Majestic and thus in this meaning, we are asking for Allah’s protection to be on Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him.

2. *As-Salam* (The Peace) in the meaning of pure and complete submission.

3. *As-Salam* (The Peace) in the meaning of safety and security.

With these different interpretations given, whose over all meaning is that of safety and security, we can understand that when we greet Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, with this phrase, what we are saying is that we, who are visiting the Imam or are reciting this visitation from far away, that we are promising the Imam that no harm or infliction of grief will ever emanate from us unto the Imam – not at that particular time that we are addressing him, nor at any other time – meaning that we will do our best to keep away from breaking the laws which they promulgated.

We understand that their entire purpose of existence was to guide and rectify humanity and to keep us on the path of *tawheed* and the obedience of Allah and this includes the obedience of all of their teachings – including the moral illnesses such as pride, arrogance, boasting, miserliness, love of the self, love of power, backbiting, etc…

Thus, when we recite these passages we must also work to ensure that we remove all such negative ethical traits from within ourselves so that we do not cause hurt or grief to the Imam.

When we have done this, then our '*Salam'* towards the Imam will be truthful and sincere. It is through the recitation of the greeting and its repetition that we seek spiritual closeness to the Imam and we instill the love for the Imam and his teachings within our lives and we work to remove all of the negative traits which may have built up within ourselves over the years.

Such greetings to the Imam and his companions and family members announce to Allah, the Prophet, the Imam and to our own inner heart that we will not rest until we have removed and annihilated all of the inner demons we carry and that we will also not rest until all external evil forces have been destroyed and reduced to mere mention in the books of history.

Part Two

Martyrdom and the bearing of witness by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, in regards to the greatness and lofty status of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him

أَللّـهُمّ إِنّي أَشْهَدُ أَنّهُ وَلِيُّكَ وَابْنُ وَلِيّكَ وَصَفِيُّكَ وَابْنُ صَفِيّكَ الْفَائِزُ بِكرَامَتِكَ، أَكْرَمْتَهُ بِالشّهَادَةِ وَحَبَوْتَهُ بِالسّعَادَةِ، وَأَجْتَبَيْتَهُ بِطِيبِ الْولاَدَةِ، وَجَعَلْتَهُ سَيّداً مِنَ السّادَةِ، وَقَائِداً مِنَ الْقَادَةِ، وَذَائِداً مِنَ الّذَادَةِ، وَأَعْطَيْتَهُ مَوَاريثَ الأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَجَعَلْتَهُ حُجّةً عَلى خَلْقِكَ مِنَ الأَوْصِيَاءِ،

O Allah! I give witness that beyond a shadow of doubt he is Your favourite and choicest confidant, who enjoys Your confidence and favour, precisely like his father. You looked to

him and elected him in Your cause, picked him and chose him for the good fortune, selected for him the best purified parents. appointed him as a guardian, a leader, and a defender of rights, a true representative (inheritor and progenitor) of guardians, leaders and defenders of rights, gave him a lot and even more from the inheritance of the Prophets, put him forward as a decisive argument, along with the other successors (meaning the twelve Imams) to all of mankind.

Explanation

In this transient world, everyone attains status or worth through a "means" – either someone or something. In this portion of the *ziyarat*, Imam as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, refers to Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, as being the representative of Allah and the son of the representative of Allah; and that he is the chosen one and the son of the chosen one of Allah – and even though he comes from such a lineage and possesses such a level of dignity and honour, however it is through his martyrdom that he was given the greatest honour.

Indeed, it is through his martyrdom – and what a martyrdom he experienced that Allah granted him the greatest level of felicity and success and in actually when we review history we see that Yazid and his supporters were seeking fame and glory in this transient world and went through many means to try and attain it, however we see that Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and his companions who were seeking nothing other than the pleasure of Allah ended up reaching the status of being the most talked about and mentioned individuals that the world has ever seen.

Part Three

The goals of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, in his uprising

فَأَعْذَرَ فى الدُّعَاءِ وَمَنَحَ النُّصْحَ، وَبَذَلَ مُهْجَتَهُ فِيكَ لِيَسْتَنْقِذَ عِبَادَكَ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ وَحَيْرَةِ الضَّلاَلَةِ،

He met with deadly dangers, acted justly and fairly, made use of everything belonging to him to pay full attention to give sincere advice; took pains, made every effort, and put his heart, mind, soul and life at the disposal of Thy mission to liberate the people from the yoke of ignorance and the evil of bewilderment.

Explanation

Before leaving for Mecca, Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, addressed his half-brother, Muhammad al-Hanafiyah and gave him a will and testament which listed the reasons for his going to Mecca and what he hoped to achieve by his movement – this can be summarized as being, *"I am seeking to bring about reformation in the nation of my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah and to enjoin the good and to forbid the evil…"*

Through a cursory study of the time of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, we understand that in the 50 short years following the death of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him

and his family, so many changes had taken place in the religion and untold innovations had entered the pristine teachings that the spirit and face of Islam had been altered immensely.

In order to restore the true visage of the religion of the Noble Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, and to carry the religion forward to future generations, Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, saw no other alternative but to take a stand in order to safeguard the religious teachings of Allah.

Through this, the Imam was making a clear proclamation that the current religion, rulers and state of affairs were not in line with the Islamic teachings of the Prophet, and that there was corruption present at all levels. Thus, his movement was to ensure that the original teachings of the religion would be resurrected and reach all parts of the world.

Part Four

A glimpse at the killers of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him

وَقَدْ تَوازَرَ عَلَيْهِ مَنْ غَرّتْهُ الدُّنْيَا، وَبَاعَ حَظّهُ بِالأَرْذَلِ الأَدْنَى، وَشَرَى آخِرَتَهُ بِالثّمَنِ الأَوْكسِ، وَتَغَطْرَسَ وَتَرَدّى فِي هَوَاهُ، وَأَسْخَطَكَ وَأَسْخَطَ نَبِيّكَ، وَأَطَاعَ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ أَهْلَ الشِّقَاقِ وَالنِّفَاقِ وَحَمَلَةَ الأَوْزَارِ الْـمُسْتَوْجِبِينَ النّارَ، فَجَاهَدَهُمْ فِيكَ صَابِراً مُحْتَسِباً حَتّى سُفِكَ فِي طَاعَتِكَ دَمُهُ وَاسْتُبِيحَ حَرِيمُهُ،

But an evildoer, deceived with empty hopes of mean and worthless worldly gains, had pressed heavily on him, and sold out his share (of the eternal bliss) for the meanest and a lowest bargain, betrayed his “Day of Judgment” for a vulgar return, took pride in insolence, fell into the fathom-well of his own base desires, provoked You and Your Prophet to anger, did as the harsh discordant, the hypocrite, the heavily burdened bearers of sin, condemned to Hellfire, advised to him, however, he (the Imam), steadily, rightly and justly coped with them, until in Your obedience, gave his life after which his family was set adrift.

أَللّـهُمّ فَالْعَنْهُمْ لَعْناً وَبِيلاً وَعَذِّبْهُمْ عَذَاباً أَلِيماً

O Allah, therefore, condemn them to hell as a denunciation and conviction; and crack down on them with a painful punishment.

اَلسّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللهِ، اَلسّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ سَيِّدِ الأَوْصِيَاءِ،

Peace be upon you O the son of the Messenger of Allah! Peace be upon you O the son of the first of the successors (of the Holy Prophet)

Explanation

In this portion of the *ziyarat*, Imam as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, describes the killers of his grandfather.

1. Umar ibn Sa'ad ibn Abil Waqqaas was one of the people directly involved in the events of Karbala. Sa'ad who was the father of Umar was one of the first people to accept Islam during the initial appointment of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family. He witnessed and went through many hardships in the formative years of Islam and through which Iran was conquered and Islam was brought to that nation and he was also responsible for the establishment of Kufa as a city.

However like many other companions of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, the love of this transient world took him over and when the issue of the caliphate came up, he did not support the rights of Imam Ali, peace be upon him, and died sometime between the years of 55 and 58 ah.

Umar ibn Sa'ad, even though he was well-known due to his father's name and history, he too was a man who was enamored by the material world and was a person whom both the Prophet and Imam Ali did not think highly of and it is for this reason that Sa'ad himself did not leave any inheritance for his son.

Umar ibn Sa'ad played an instrumental role in Karbala as he was the commander of the forces of Ibn Ziyaad. He gathered over 4,000 soldiers from Kufa to stand up against Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him.

2. Shimr ibn Dhil Jawshan was another perpetrators of Karbala. During the era of Imam Ali, peace be upon him, he was actually on the side of and a fervent supporter of the Imam and fought alongside the Commander of the Faithful in the Battle of Siffeen against Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, however he ended up "changing" and then supported the likes of Yazid and fought against Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, on the day of Ashura, and he committed many atrocities against the Ahlul Bayt, peace be upon all of them.

This is an example of the types of people who fought against and killed Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and his noble family and companion.

Both the historical narrations and the traditions of the Prophet and his family show us that one of the principle reasons for what transpired in Karbala had everything to do with "love of the transient world" and a desire to attain as much of it as possible.

Farazdaq, the famous poet has stated: "In the year 60 ah, I accompanied my mother from Kufa towards Mecca for the Hajj. On the way, we met Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him. The Imam asked me, "What is the news from Kufa?" I replied: "The hearts of the people are with you, however their swords are with the Bani Umayyah…"

To this Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, replied: "Indeed people are servants of this transient world and the religion is but a plaything on the tips of their tongues. They gravitate around the religion so long as it meets their material needs and requirements, however when they are tested with tribulations and difficulties, very few people hold firm onto the true faith."

Part Five

Learning life lessons from the Leader of the Martyrs

أَشْهَدُ اَنّكَ اَمِينُ اللهِ وَابْنُ اَمِينِهِ،

I bear witness that Allah put faith in you like He had full confidence in your father,

عِشْتَ سَعِيداً وَمَضَيْتَ حَمِيداً وَمُتّ فَقِيداً مَظْلُوماً شَهيداً

and that you always looked for and collected good and virtue, lived a highly praiseworthy life, and departed from this world a martyr, forsaken and abused;

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنّ اللهِ مُنْجِزٌ مَا وَعَدَكَ، وَمُهْلِكٌ مَنْ خَذَلَكَ، وَمُعَذِّبٌ مَنْ قَتَلَكَ

And I bear witness that Allah will promptly fulfill the promise He made to you, and destroy those who left you helpless and punish those who killed you;

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنّكَ وَفَيْتَ بِعَهْدِ اللهِ وَجَاهَدْتَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ حَتّى أَتَاكَ الْيَقِينُ، فَلَعَنَ اللهُ مَنْ قَتَلَكَ، وَلَعَنَ اللهُ مَنْ ظَلَمَكَ، وَلَعَنَ اللهُ اُمّةً سَمِعَتْ بِذَلِكَ فَرَضِيَتْ بِهِ

And I bear witness that you kept your promise made with Allah, and strived in His way until what was certain came upon you, so curse of Allah be on those who killed you, and curse of Allah be on those who oppressed you, and curse of Allah be on the people who came to know of it and approved (of all of it).

Explanation

The movement of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, has taught us many lessons – both on an individual and personal level and also on a societal level – some of which include:

1. **Personal and individual:**

   i. Spirit of monotheism (*Tawheed*) and the spirit of connection to Allah;

ii. Servitude to Allah;

iii. Turning away from personal desires and the allures of this world;

iv. Submission to the will and pleasure of Allah;

v. Requirement of studying and knowing all of the Divinely taught values and worth of the human being;

vi. Bravery and chivalry;

vii. Standing firm in the face of difficulties and tribulations;

viii. The spiritual worth of the human being;

ix. Forgiveness and clemency;

x. Not being afraid of death or martyrdom – rather, to accept these wholeheartedly;

2. **Communal and societal:**

i. Self-sacrifice and thinking of others before oneself;

ii. Loyalty;

iii. Equality of humanity and removal of all forms of discrimination;

iv. Importance of being political aware and active;

v. Enjoining the good and forbidding the evil;

vi. Realizing that the truth does not lie in ‘numbers’;

vii. Standing up to oppression and tyranny and not following the wicked;

viii. Understanding that “politics” is not separate from “religion,” and that “social struggle” and “spiritual action” are one and the same.

These lessons mentioned above are but a drop in the unlimited ocean of the noble Divine teachings which were embodied in the message of the Prophets and their safeguarding at the hands of all of the Imams – specifically Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon all of them.

Part Six

Renewal of the pledge of allegiance to the Doyen of the Martyrs, al-Husayn ibn Ali, peace be upon them both

أَللّـهُمّ إِنّي أُشْهِدُكَ أَنّي وَلِيٌّ لِـمَنْ وَالاهُ وَعَدُوٌّ لِـمَنْ عَادَاهُ

O Allah be my witness that I make friends with those who love him and oppose those who

deny him.

بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَأُمّي يَا بْنَ رَسُولِ اللهِ

May my father and mother be sacrificed for you O the son of the Messenger of Allah.

Explanation

This portion teaches us an important lesson which is that our friendship and enmity in life should revolve around their friendship and enmity; we also learn that our happiness and grief and every other emotion and action in our lives should all revolve around Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and that in actuality, we become "extensions" of the Husyani mission.

Since the meaning of "*Shia*" is "follower," it only makes sense that as the "*Shia*" of the Imams, we truly follow them in war and peace; in love and hate – if we truly wish to be counted amongst their adherents and followers.

This is the same understanding that we are given in *Hadith al-Kisa* in which we say, "O Allah! Indeed these are my Ahul Bayt and my confidants and my supporters. Their flesh is my flesh; their blood is my blood; whoever hurts them has hurt me, whoever displeases them, displeases me, and whoever fights against them, fights against me; I am at war with those who are at war with them and I am at peace with those who are at peace with them and I have enmity with those who have enmity with them and love those who love them. Indeed they are from me and I am from them…"

Part Seven

The pure, untouched genealogy of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him

أَشْهَدُ اَنّكَ كُنْتَ نُوراً فى الأَصْلابِ الشّامِخَةِ وَالأَرْحَامِ الْـمُطَهّرَةِ، لَمْ تُنَجِّسْكَ الْجَاهِلِيّةُ بِاَنْجَاسِهَا وَلَمْ تُلْبِسْكَ الْـمُدْلهمّاتُ مِنْ ثِيَابِها، وأَشْهَدُ أَنّكَ مِنْ دَعَائِمِ الدِّينِ وأَرْكانِ الْـمُسْلِمينَ وَمَعْقِلِ الْـمُؤْمِنينَ

I know and bear witness that you were a Divinely-inspired light in the sublime loins and in the pure wombs, never touched you the dirt of ignorance, nor ever obscurity concealed you in its folds; I bear witness that you are the pillar of the religion - support of the Muslims, refuge of the faithful;

وَاَشْهَدُ اَنّكَ الإِمَامُ الْبَرُّ التّقِيُّ الرّضِيُّ الزّكِيُّ الْهَادِيُ الْـمَهْدِيُّ

I bear witness that you are a truthful, well-aware, content, intelligent, rightly guided guide (Imam);

Part Eight

A description of the progeny of Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him

وَاَشْهَدُ اَنّ الأئِمّةَ مِنْ وُلْدِكَ كَلِمَةُ التّقْوى وَأعْلامُ الْهُدى وَالْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقى، وَالْحُجّةُ على أهْلِ الدّنْيا

I bear witness that the Imams among your descendants are the symbols of "conscious piety" and signs of "true guidance", the "safe handle"- Islam - and the decisive arguments over mankind;

Part Nine

The theological beliefs (Usul ad-Din) of the followers of the Ahlul Bayt, peace be upon them all

وأشْهَدُ أنّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَبِإيابِكُمْ، مُوقِنٌ بِشَرايِعِ ديني وَخَواتيمِ عَمَلي، وَقَلْبي لِقَلْبِكُمْ سِلْمٌ وَأمْري لِلأمْرِكُمْ مُتّبِعٌ وَنُصْرَتي لَكُمْ مُعَدّةٌ حَتّى يَأذَنَ اللهِ لَكُمْ، فَمَعَكُمْ مَعَكُمْ لا مَعَ عَدُوّكُمْ

*I declare positively that I have full faith in you, and I know for certain that you will return. I am fully committed to the laws of my religion and certain of my deeds, my mind and heart ready for your return and my affairs carried out in the light of your instructions, until Allah gives you permission, together with you - along with you, **and not** with your enemies.*

Part Ten

Salawat (prayers of Allah) upon the noble Ahlul Bayt, peace be upon them all

صَلواتُ اللهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعلى أرْواحِكُمْ وَأجْسادِكُمْ وَشاهِدِكُمْ وَغائِبِكُمْ وَظاهِرِكُمْ وَباطِنِكُمْ آمينَ رَبّ الْعالِمينَ

Blessings of Allah be upon you, and upon your souls, and upon your bodies, and when you are present, and when you are absent, and upon your perceivable aspects, and upon your innermost genius, be it so, O Lord of the worlds!

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