

Visitation

Visitation To the Holy Shrine of God’s Messenger

Thanks to God we have had the honor to visit the House of God and completed the Hajj rites. We now will go to Medina to visit the tombs of the Holy Prophet (saw) and the Imams (as). We approach their holy shrines, which are full of mercy and a fount of blessings:

يا سادتي وموالي، إني توجّهتُ بكم، أئمتي وعدّتي ليوم فقري وحاجتي إلى الله،
واستشفعتُ بكم إلى الله فاشفعوا لي عند الله واستنقذوني من ذنوبي عند الله،
فإنكم وسيلتي إلى الله وبحبكم وبقرّبكم أرجو نجاة من الله فكونوا عند الله
رجائي، يا سادتي يا أولياء الله.

“O my chiefs, O my masters, I turn to Allah through you, O my Imams, my supporters on the days of my destitution. I seek your advocacy before Allah, I request you to speak in my favor before Allah, obtain pardon for me from Allah, and deliver me from my sins, through my love of you and nearness to you, obtain deliverance from me from Allah. O my chiefs, O close friends of Allah.”¹

Love For the Ahl ul-Bayt is Reward of Prophethood

According to the Holy Qur’an, the love for the household of the Holy Prophet (saw) as the reward of prophethood is obligatory on the ummah:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (The Holy Qur’an; 42:23)”

According to traditions reported by both the Shia and Sunnah, the word ‘near relatives’ has been interpreted as the household of the Messenger of Allah (saw). Hence, love of them is aimed at being guided under their heavenly light, attaining eternal happiness, and getting rid of the bonds of Satan. In this relation, the Holy Qur’an says:

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا

“Say: I do not ask you aught in return except that he who will, may take the way to his Lord. (25:57)”

Taking the way to God, according to traditions, can be realized only under the shelter of the Ahl ul-Bayt; therefore, courtesy to them is in the interest of the ummah and not in the interest of the household as the Holy Qur’an expressly says:

قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ.

“Say: Whatever reward I have asked of you, that is only for yourselves. (34:47)”

Wilayat Makes the Hajj Rites Perfect

Consensus among the Shiites is that God’s acceptance of Muslims’ deeds depends on belief in the Imamate of Imam ‘Ali and the Imams of the Ahl ul-Bayt (as). Traditions related to this matter have reached us through both Shiite and Sunni reference books by successive hearsay.² Suleiman Aamash quotes Imam Sadiq (as) and his honorable fathers as saying:

“The Messenger of Allah (saw) said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ:

يَا عَلِيُّ، أَنْتَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِمَامُ الْمُتَّقِينَ.

يَا عَلِيُّ، أَنْتَ سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَوَارِثُ عِلْمِ النَّبِيِّينَ وَخَيْرُ الصِّدِّيقِينَ وَأَفْضَلُ

السَّابِقِينَ.

يا عَلِيُّ، أَنْتَ زَوْجُ سَيِّدَةِ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَخَلِيفَةُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ.

يا عَلِيُّ، أَنْتَ مَوْلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

يا عَلِيُّ، أَنْتَ الْحُجَّةُ بَعْدِي عَلَى النَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ. إِسْتَوْجَبَ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ تَوَلَّاكَ
وَاسْتَحَقَّ النَّارَ مَنْ عَادَاكَ.

يا عَلِيُّ، وَالَّذِي بَعَثَنِي بِالنُّبُوَّةِ وَاصْطَفَانِي عَلَى جَمِيعِ الْبَرِيَّةِ لَوْ أَنَّ عَبْدًا عَبَدَ اللَّهَ
أَلْفَ عَامٍ مَا قَبِلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِوِلَايَتِكَ وَوِلَايَةِ الْأَئِمَّةِ مِنْ وُلْدِكَ. وَإِنَّ وِلَايَتَكَ لَا
تُقْبَلُ إِلَّا بِالْبِرَاءَةِ مِنْ أَعْدَائِكَ وَأَعْدَاءِ الْأَئِمَّةِ مِنْ وُلْدِكَ؛ بِذَلِكَ أَخْبَرَنِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ
السَّلَامُ، فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ.

O 'Ali, you are the commander of the faithful and the Imam of the pious.

O 'Ali, you are the master of the vicegerents, inheritor of the knowledge of prophets, the best of the truthful, and the head of the foremost in faith.

O 'Ali, you are the husband of the chiefess of the world women and you are the successor of the Messengers.

O 'Ali, you are the master of the believers.

O 'Ali, you are the proof of Allah among all human beings after me. Whoever loves you deserves Paradise and whoever antagonizes you will enter into fire.

O 'Ali, (I swear) by One Who appointed me as prophet and chosen me from among people, if a man worships Allah for thousand years, his worship will not be accepted by Allah save with belief in your Imamate and that of your sons. Belief in your Imamate is not accepted save by disavowal of your enemies and those of your progeny. Archangel Gabriel (as) informed me of it. Whoever accepts it is a

believer and whoever denies it is an unbeliever.”³

Abu-Hamza reported that Imam Sajjad (as) asked, ‘Which areas are the best?’ I answered, ‘Allah, His Messenger, and son of His Messenger know best.’ He (as) then said:

إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْبِقَاعِ مَا بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ. وَلَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا عَمَرَ مَا عَمَّرَ نُوحٌ عَلَيْهِ
السَّلَامُ فِي قَوْمِهِ –أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا– يَصُومُ النَّهَارَ وَيَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ فِي
ذَلِكَ الْمَقَامِ ثُمَّ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِغَيْرِ وِلَايَتِنَا لَمْ يَنْتَفِعْ بِذَلِكَ شَيْئًا.

The best area –in the world– is that lying between the Rukn (corner of the Kaaba) and Maqam (standing–place of Prophet Ibrahim). If a man lives as long as Prophet Noah –nine hundred and fifty years– and spends all this period with fasting during days and worshipping Allah during nights in that area, all his acts of worship will be worthless unless he believes in our wilaya –divine leadership–.

Acceptable Hajj

Meaath ibn Kathir reported: It was big crowds on that season of Hajj when I approached Imam Sadiq (as) and said, ‘Really, the performers of Hajj are so many.’ He (as) turned his sight towards them and asked me to be nearer to him. As I did, He (as) said:

غُثَاءٌ يَأْتِي بِهِ الْمَوْجُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ! وَاللَّهِ مَا الْحَجُّ إِلَّا لَكُمْ. لَا وَاللَّهِ، مَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ
إِلَّا مِنْكُمْ.

They are just like scum that waves bring from everywhere. By Allah I swear, true Hajj is only yours. Certainly, Allah will accept your Hajj only.⁴

Al-Harith ibn al-Mughira reported: I was sitting near Imam Sadiq (as) when somebody came in and asked, ‘Son of Allah’s Messenger, the performers of Hajj this year were so many.’ The Imam answered (as):

إِنْ شَأَوْوا فَلْيَكْثُرُوا وَإِنْ شَأَوْوا فَلْيَقَلُّوا. وَاللَّهِ مَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا مِنْكُمْ وَلَا يَغْفِرُ إِلَّا
لَكُمْ

Let them be so many or so few. By Allah I swear, He will not accept but the Hajj that you perform, and

none will be forgiven except you.5

Abu'l-Jaroud reported: I said to Imam Baqir (as) in Mecca, or Mina, that the performers of Hajj were so many. He (as) said:

مَا أَقَلَّ الْحَاجِّ! مَا يُغْفَرُ إِلَّا لَكَ وَلِأَصْحَابِكَ وَلَا يُتَقَبَّلُ إِلَّا مِنْكَ وَمِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ

In fact, they are so few. None will be forgiven except your companions and you, and nobody's act will be admitted (by God) except your companions' and yours.6

Mansour as-Sayqal reported: I was with Imam Sadiq (as) in his pavilion in Mina (during the season of Hajj) when he looked at people and said:

يَأْكُلُونَ الْحَرَامَ وَيَلْبَسُونَ الْحَرَامَ وَيَنْكِحُونَ الْحَرَامَ. وَتَأْكُلُونَ الْحَلَالَ وَتَلْبَسُونَ
الْحَلَالَ وَتَنْكِحُونَ الْحَلَالَ. لَا وَاللَّهِ، مَا يَحِجُّ غَيْرُكُمْ وَلَا يُتَقَبَّلُ إِلَّا مِنْكُمْ.

They eat, dress, and marry illegally. But you eat, dress, and marry legally. By Allah, it is only you whose Hajj is valid and whose deeds are accepted.7

Zureyq reported: I asked Imam Sadiq (as) about the best deed after the recognition of God. He (as) said:

مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَ الْمَعْرِفَةِ يَعْدِلُ هَذِهِ الصَّلَاةَ، وَلَا بَعْدَ الْمَعْرِفَةِ وَالصَّلَاةِ شَيْءٌ يَعْدِلُ
الزَّكَاةَ، وَلَا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ يَعْدِلُ الصَّوْمَ، وَلَا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ يَعْدِلُ الْحَجَّ، وَفَاتِحَةٌ
ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ وَخَاتِمَتُهُ مَعْرِفَتُنَا.

Nothing after the recognition of Allah may mount to prayer. Nothing, after the recognition of Allah and the prayer, may mount to zakat. Nothing after these may mount to fasting. Nothing after these may mount to Hajj. The opening and the end of all these is the recognition of us (i.e. the divine leadership of the Imams).8

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَمَسَّكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى فَلْيَتَمَسَّكَ بِحُبِّ عَلِيٍّ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

He who wants to hold fast to the Firmest Handle must cling to love for ‘Ali and my household –the Ahl ul-Bayt–.

Visiting the Prophet’s Tomb

Imam Ridha’ (as) says:

ثُمَّ تَزُورُ قَبْرَ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمُصْطَفَى صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فَإِنَّهُ قَالَ: مَنْ حَجَّ وَلَمْ يَزُرْنِي فَقَدْ جَفَانِي. وَتَزُورُ قَبْرَ السَّادَةِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

Then you will visit the tomb of Muhammad (saw), for the Holy Prophet has said: “Whoever performs the Hajj rites but does not visit my tomb will be unkind to me.” And then visit the tombs of the Sayyids (as)⁹

Imam Baqir (as) looked at those who were circumambulating the Holy House and said:

أَمْرُوا أَنْ يَطُوفُوا بِهَذَا ثُمَّ يَأْتُونَا فَيُعْرِفُونَا مَوَدَّتَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَعْرِضُوا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرَهُمْ.

They are ordained to circumambulate (the House) then come to us to show us their love (loyalty) for us and then offer their support for us.¹⁰

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

ابْدِئُوا بِمَكَّةَ وَاخْتِمُوا بِنَا.

“Start Hajj with Mecca and complete it with us.”¹¹

Yahya ibn Yessar reported: During the Hajj, we passed by Imam Sadiq (as) who said to us:

حُجَّاجُ بَيْتِ اللَّهِ وَزُورُ قَبْرِ نَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَشِيعَةُ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، هَنِيئًا لَكُمْ.

O Pilgrims of the House of Allah, visitors of His Prophet’s tomb, and adherents (Shia) of Muhammad’s household, congratulations!¹²

Al-Hasan ibn al-Washa reported: I asked Imam Ridha’ (as) about the reward of him who visits the tomb

of any of the Imams (as), and he answered:

لَهُ مِثْلُ مَنْ أَتَى قَبْرَ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ... الْجَنَّةُ وَاللَّهُ.

He (who visits the tomb of any of the Imams) will be rewarded as same as him who visits the tomb of Abu-Abdilah (Imam Husayn) (as) that is Paradise, I swear it by Allah. 13

مَنْ زَارَنَا فِي مَمَاتِنَا فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَنَا فِي حَيَاتِنَا، وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ عَدُوَّنَا فَكَأَنَّمَا جَاهَدَ
مَعَنَا، وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى لِمَحِبِّبِنَا فَقَدْ أَحَبَّنَا، وَمَنْ سَرَّ مُؤْمِنًا فَقَدْ سَرَّنَا، وَمَنْ أَعَانَ فَقِيرَنَا
كَانَ مُكَافَأَتُهُ عَلَى جَدِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

“He who comes to visit our tombs after our decease will have the same reward of him who visited us in our lifetime. He who fights our enemy will be regarded as if he fought alongside us. He who loves those who love us will love us. He who pleases a believer will indeed please us. He who helps a poor man belonging to us will be recompensed by our grandfather Muhammad (saw).” 14

Imam Sadiq (as) quotes the Holy Prophet (saw) as saying:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ وَكَّلَ بِفَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ رَعِيلاً مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ يَحْفَظُونَهَا مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهَا
وَمِنْ خَلْفِهَا وَعَنْ يَمِينِهَا وَعَنْ يَسَارِهَا وَهُمْ مَعَهَا فِي حَيَاتِهَا وَعِنْدَ قَبْرِهَا بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا
يُكْثِرُونَ الصَّلَاةَ عَلَى أَبِيهَا وَبَعْلِهَا وَبَنِيهَا. فَمَنْ زَارَنِي بَعْدَ وَفَاتِي فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَنِي فِي
حَيَاتِي، وَمَنْ زَارَ فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَنِي وَمَنْ زَارَ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَ فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ وَمَنْ زَارَ الْحُسَيْنَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَ عَلِيًّا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَمَنْ زَارَ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمَا فَكَأَنَّمَا زَارَهُمَا.

“Allah has assigned a group of angels to guard Fatima (as) in front, behind, and on the left and right sides. Those angels are constantly accompanying her in her life, her grave after her death, and send greetings to her father, her husband, and her progeny. Therefore, whoever visits me after my death will be regarded as if he indeed visited me in my lifetime, whoever visits Fatima will be regarded as if he indeed visited me, whoever visits ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib will be regarded as if he indeed visited Fatima, whoever visits Husayn will be regarded as if he has indeed visited ‘Ali (as), and whoever visits their progeny will be regarded as if he indeed visited those two honorable ones.” 15

Imam Sadiq, on the authority of his fathers, reported that the Messenger of God addressed to Imam 'Ali (as):

يا أبا الحسن، إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَ قَبْرَكَ وَقَبْرَ وُلْدِكَ بَقَاعاً مِنْ بَقَاعِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَرَصَاتٍ مِنْ عَرَصَاتِهَا. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ جَعَلَ قُلُوبَ نَجَبَاءٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَصَفْوَةٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ تَحْنُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَتَحْتَمِلُ الْمَذَلَّةَ وَالْأَذَى فِيكُمْ فَيَعْمُرُونَ قُبُورَكُمْ وَيُكْثِرُونَ زِيَارَتَهَا تَقَرُّباً مِنْهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَوَدَّةً مِنْهُمْ لِرَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. أَوْلَيْكَ يَا عَلِيُّ الْمَخْصُوصُونَ بِشَفَاعَتِي وَالْوَارِدُونَ حَوْضِي وَهُمْ زُؤَارِي وَجِيرَانِي غَدًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ.

يا عليُّ، مَنْ عَمَرَ قُبُورَهُمْ وَتَعَاهَدَهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَعَانَ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنَ دَاوُدَ عَلَى بِنَاءِ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ، وَمَنْ زَارَ قُبُورَهُمْ عَدَلَ ذَلِكَ ثَوَابَ سَبْعِينَ حِجَّةً بَعْدَ حِجَّةِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَخَرَجَ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ مِنْ زِيَارَتِكُمْ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ.

فَأَبْشِرْ يَا عَلِيُّ وَبَشِّرْ أَوْلِيَاءَكَ وَمَحَبِّبِكَ مِنَ النَّعِيمِ بِمَا لَا عَيْنٌ رَأَتْ وَلَا أُذُنٌ سَمِعَتْ وَلَا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ. وَلَكِنَّ حُثَالَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ يُعَيِّرُونَ زُؤَارَ قُبُورِكُمْ كَمَا تَعَيَّرُ الزَّانِيَةُ بَزْنَاهَا، أَوْلَيْكَ شِرَارُ أُمَّتِي لَا تَنَالُهُمْ شَفَاعَتِي وَلَا يَرِدُونَ حَوْضِي.

O Abu'l-Hasan, Allah has certainly made your descendants' and your tombs areas and yards of Paradise. He, Glorified and Elevated is He, has also caused the hearts of some choice, pure servants of Him to yearn for them and tolerate humiliation and harm for you. They therefore will construct and frequent your tombs for nothing more than seeking nearness to Allah and showing love for His Messenger (saw). O 'Ali, those (servants) will be granted exclusively my Intercession, will come to my Divine Pool, and will be my visitors and neighbors in Paradise.

O 'Ali, he who constructs and takes care of your tombs will be regarded as if he helped (Prophet) Solomon son of (Prophet) David construct the Bayt ul-Maqdis (the Sacred Mosque of Jerusalem). He who visits the tombs of your descendants will have the reward of seventy times of recommended Hajj and will be released from his sins as if he has just been given birth by his mother, and these rewards will be continuous until he returns home.

O 'Ali, enjoy the good tidings and convey them to your adherents and followers—you will be enjoying the bliss whose like has never been seen, heard, or even imagined. But there will come some people who dishonor the visitors of your tombs in the same way as a prostitute is dishonored. Those people are the evilest individuals of my ummah; they will not be granted my Intercession and will not be allowed to approach my Divine Pool (on the Day of Resurrection).¹⁶

Peace Be Upon You, O Messenger of Allah and Upon Your Pure and Immaculate Household

O Medina, how honorable you are for holding the pure body of the superior of the creatures, source of pride of all beings, and most beloved of Allah in your arms. O Medina, you have amazed not only the terrestrial but also the celestial beings with your glory for becoming the descending place of God's favor and blessings.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! Call for Divine blessings on him and salute him with a becoming salutation. (The Holy Qur'an; 33:56)”

This illuminated garden, which is as Paradise in the eyes of the pilgrims, is the holy shrine of the Messenger of Allah—Prophet Muhammad, may the blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny. Every Muslim has the wish to visit the tomb of the Holy Prophet (saw) at least once in his lifetime. Thanks to God for giving us the honor of visiting this holy shrine.

Souls of True Believers Keep On Living After Death and They Are Aware of All Events

Based on logical proof, man's soul keeps on living after departing from the body. It has also been proved that the souls of true believers, prophets, and Imams, after departing from their bodies and going to heaven, become more illuminated, their knowledge of this world become vaster, and their influence on the world become more effective. About those martyred for God's sake, the Holy Qur'an says:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ.

“And reckon not those who are killed in Allah’s way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord. (3: 169)”

The Holy Qur’an has likened the unbelievers to the dead:

قَدْ يَيْسُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا يَيْسَ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ.

“Indeed, they despair of the hereafter as the unbelievers despair of those in tombs. (60: 13)”

Sheikh Mufid, may Allah be pleased with him, in his book titled *al-Maqalaat*, writes down:

وَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَالْأئِمَّةَ مِنْ عِترته عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ خَاصَّةً لَا تَخْفَى عَلَيْهِمْ بَعْدَ الْوفاةِ أَحْوَالَ شِيعتِهِمْ فِي دَارِ الدُّنْيَا بِإِعْلَامِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَهُمْ ذَلِكَ حَالاً بَعْدَ حَالٍ وَيَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ الْمُناجِي لَهُمْ فِي مَشَاهِدِهِمُ الْمُكْرَمَةِ الْعِظَامِ بِلطيفةٍ مِنْ لَطَائِفِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بَيْنَهُمْ بِهَا مِنْ جَمهورِ الْعِبَادِ، وَتَبْلُغُهُمُ الْمُناجاةُ مِنْ بُعْدٍ كَمَا جَاءَتْ بِهِ الرِوايةُ.

*God’s Messenger and the Imams of his household are, adfter decease, ware of the state of their followers in this world, and no state of their followers is hidden from them. God, Exalted is He, informs them about all these matters. They hear the supplications of those who speak to them in their dignified, handsome shrines due to one of God’s special favors so that He will distinguish them from others. They, too, are aware of the supplications of those who are far away.*¹⁷

Abdullah ibn Bukeir quotes Imam Sadiq (as) as saying in relation to Imam Husayn (as):

وَإِنَّهُ لَيَنْظُرُ إِلَى زُوارِهِ فَهُوَ أَعْرَفُ بِهِمْ وَبِأَسْمائِهِمْ وَأَسْمَاءِ آبائِهِمْ وَمَا فِي رِحالِهِمْ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ بِوَلدِهِ. وَإِنَّهُ لَيَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَنْ يَبْكِيهِ فَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ وَيَسْأَلُ أَباهُ الْاسْتِغْفارَ وَيَقولُ: أَيُّها الْباكي، لَوْ عَلِمْتَ ما أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ لَفَرِحْتَ أَكْثَرَ ممَّا حَزَنْتَ. وَإِنَّهُ لَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَخَطِيئَةٍ.

Most surely, he looks at the visitors of his tomb and knows them by the name of themselves, their fathers, and the provisions they have with them better than a father might know his own children. He looks at the supplicants favorably and asks forgiveness for them, saying: O Suppliant, if you know what Allah has prepared for you, your happiness will exceed your sorrows, for he asks forgiveness for every

wrongdoing and sin of the supplicant.”¹⁸

Therefore, we realize that the special favors of God’s disciples are felt within the precincts of the Imams’ holy shrines more than anywhere else. Hence, we should expose ourselves to such favors and say:

بَابِي أَنْتُمْ وَأُمِّي وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي وَأُسْرَتِي، أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَأَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي مُؤْمِنٌ بِكُمْ وَبِمَا
أَمَنْتُمْ بِهِ، كَافِرٌ بَعْدُوكُمْ وَبِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ، مُسْتَبْصِرٌ بِشَأْنِكُمْ وَيَضَلَالَةَ مَنْ خَالَفَكُمْ،
مُؤَالٍ لَكُمْ وَلِأَوْلِيَائِكُمْ، مُبْغِضٌ لِأَعْدَائِكُمْ وَمُعَادٌ لَهُمْ، سَلِيمٌ لِمَنْ سَالَمَكُمْ وَحَرْبٌ
لِمَنْ حَارَبَكُمْ، مُحَقِّقٌ لِمَا حَقَّقْتُمْ مُبْطِلٌ لِمَا أَبْطَلْتُمْ، مُطِيعٌ لَكُمْ عَارِفٌ بِحَقِّكُمْ، مُقَرَّبٌ
بِفَضْلِكُمْ مُحْتَمِلٌ لِعِلْمِكُمْ مُحْتَجِبٌ بِذِمَّتِكُمْ مُعْتَرِفٌ بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ بِأَيَابِكُمْ مُصَدِّقٌ
بِرَجْعَتِكُمْ مُنْتَظِرٌ لِأَمْرِكُمْ مُرْتَقِبٌ لِدَوْلَتِكُمْ آخِذٌ بِقَوْلِكُمْ عَامِلٌ بِأَمْرِكُمْ مُسْتَجِيرٌ بِكُمْ
زَائِرٌ لَكُمْ عَائِدٌ بِقُبُورِكُمْ مُسْتَشْفِعٌ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِكُمْ وَمُتَقَرِّبٌ بِكُمْ إِلَيْهِ
وَمُقَدِّمٌ أَمَامَ طَلِبَتِي وَحَوَائِجِي وَإِرَادَتِي فِي كُلِّ أَحْوَالِي وَأُمُورِي.

“My father, mother, family, property, and possessions are at your disposal. Allah and you bear witness that I believe in you, thereby have faith in you: I renounce your enemies, and that by which they have disowned you, I am fully aware of your glorious purpose, and that which leads astray in your hostility; I am your friend, and a friend of your friends, I dislike your enemies and strive against their designs, I am at peace with those who make peace with you, I take the field against those who march against you, I accept as true that which acknowledges your truth, I prove false that which takes a stand against you, I follow in your footsteps.

I am fully aware of your rights and privileges, I recognize your superiority over others, I carry and preserve your knowledge, I take refuge under your prospective shelter, I respond to you, I know for sure that you will come back, I believe in your promised return, I anticipate and look for your (just and fair) order, I pray for your (good) administration, I hold fast to that which you have said, I carry out your orders, I take shelter in your neighborhood, I make a visit to do homage and praise you, for me your ‘resting abode’ are sanctuaries; in the court of the Almighty you are my advocates, I seek His nearness through you, for seeking fulfillment of my wants and desire, under all circumstances, I follow you to make headway.”¹⁹

Dust from Messengers’ footsteps is life-giving

About the story of the Golden Calf of Samiri, the Holy Qur’an says:

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَا سَامِرِيُّ. قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا بِهِ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِنْ
أَثَرِ الرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا.

“He said: What was then your object, O Samiri? He said: I saw what they did not see, so I took a handful of the dust from the footsteps of the messenger, and then I threw it in the casting. (20:95-6)”

We should reflect on the Qur’anic truth that the life of an angel is so effective and influential that when he walks on the earth as a human being, the dust under his foot becomes a source of life in a dead being. The dust of the tombs of God’s disciples, especially the tomb of the master of the martyrs; Imam Husayn (as), has a healing, life-giving peculiarity. When God gives such an effect to the dust under Gabriel’s foot, He can give the same to the dust of the grave of the Messenger and his household who are more honorable than archangels:

يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ.

“He specially chooses for His mercy whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace. (The Holy Qur’an; 3:74)”

Evidently, the soul of an imperfect man has a very limited activity while that of perfect men, like prophets and Imams, has infinite activity so as healing the patients, meeting the request of the needy, guiding those who go astray, and solving unsolvable problems are very easy to them.

Now we are facing the Holy Shrine of the Messenger of Allah. It is an opportune time for expressing our love and need for him in view of his sublime spiritual position. He has been described as mercy for the worlds:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“And most surely you conform to sublime morality. (The Holy Qur’an; 68:4)”

بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“To the believers, he is compassionate, merciful. (The Holy Qur’an; 9:128)”

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ.

“As for him who asks, do not chide. (The Holy Qur’an; 93: 10)”

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ
عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءً يَجَاهِلَةً ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“And when those who believe in Our communications come to you, say: Peace be on you, your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, (so) that if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns after that and acts aright, then He is Forgiving, Merciful. (The Holy Qur’an; 6:54)”

In the holy shrine of the Messenger of God (saw), we have an excellent opportunity to raise our hands of need before the house of his daughter (as) for no one leaves this holy shrine without having his request fulfilled. In the Holy Qur’an, God praises the Ahl ul-Bayt for giving their food to the poor, the orphan, and the captive in an excellent way:

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا. إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا
نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

“And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive: we only feed you for Allah’s sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks. (The Holy Qur’an; 78:8-9)”

After describing blessings in Paradise, God says:

إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا

“Surely this is a reward for you, and your striving shall be recompensed. (The Holy Qur’an; 78:22)”

Therefore, we should stand before this door—door of Allah, and supplicate from the bottom of our hearts, saying:

بِكُمْ أَخْرَجَنَا اللَّهُ مِنَ الدُّلِّ وَفَرَّجَ عَنَّا غَمْرَاتُ الْكُرُوبِ وَأَنْقَذَنَا مِنْ شَفَا جُرْفٍ

الهِلَكَاتِ وَمِنَ النَّارِ

“It is on account of you that Allah pulls us out of the depth of degradation, sets us free from the clutches of hardships, takes us to safety from precipice of annihilation and from falling down into the Hell.”²⁰

Shiites Are in Search of Fatima’s Grave in Medina

Where is the grave of Fatima? Where was she buried? Is it in Baqie cemetery, between the mimbar (pulpit) and grave of the Holy Prophet (saw) or in her own house? Where is the grave of the honorable lady before whose arrival the Holy Prophet (saw) would rise up, welcome her, kiss her hand, and give his own place to her?²¹

With his polite behavior, the Messenger of God intended to show part of the heavenly nature of his daughter so that the ummah would realize her worthy position and reach eternal happiness through infinite blessings of her holiness.

The Messenger of God (saw) is quoted –by both Shiite and Sunni Muslims– as saying:

فَاطِمَةُ بَضْعَةٌ مِنِّي، مَنْ آذَاهَا فَقَدْ آذَانِي وَمَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ.

“Fatima is part of me and I am part of her. He who hurts her is hurting me and whoever hurts me is hurting Allah.”

يَا فَاطِمَةَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْضَى لِرِضَاكِ وَيَغْضَبُ لِرِغْضَبِكَ.

“O Fatima, surely Allah becomes wrathful when you are wrathful and pleased when you are pleased.”

To hurt Lady Fatima is to hurt the Messenger of God, and to hurt the Messenger of God entails God’s curse:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا.

“Surely as for those who hurt Allah and His Apostle, Allah has cursed them in this world and the Hereafter, and He has prepared for them a chastisement bringing disgrace. (The Holy Qur’an;

33:57”

Since we do not exactly know where the great lady of Islam was buried, we shed tears on the earth of Baqie cemetery for the likelihood that her grave is there, and say:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ.

Peace be upon you, O' daughter of the Messenger of Allah.

We sometimes stand between the grave and mimbar of the Holy Prophet (saw) for the visitation of her grave, based on the saying of the Messenger of God (saw):

مَا بَيْنَ قَبْرِي وَمِنْبَرِي رَوْضَةٌ مِنْ رِيَاضِ الْجَنَّةِ.

The area between my grave and mimbar is a garden of Paradise.

We sometimes go behind the Holy Prophet's grave, where the house of Fatima (as), for salutation. We shed tears by the graves of Fatima (as) and her sons until the reappearance of her eleventh progeny, Imam Mahdi under whose just rule we will calm down.

Al-Baqie Cemetery, the Sacred Hall of Audience

This is Baqie cemetery where thousands of great religious personalities, companions, wives, and children of the Holy Prophet (saw) are buried. What gives dignity to this cemetery is the pure bodies of four Imams (as). For this reason, the Ahl ul-Bayt's followers turn to Baqie lovingly during the Hajj season and weep bitterly though there is no mausoleum and the graves are at ground level:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْتَقِدُ حُرْمَةَ صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْمَشْهَدِ الشَّرِيفِ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ كَمَا أَعْتَقِدُهَا فِي حَضْرَتِهِ وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ رَسُولَكَ وَخُلَفَاءَكَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَكَ يُرْزَقُونَ يَرُونَ مَقَامِي وَيَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامِي وَيَرُدُّونَ سَلَامِي.

O Allah, I believe in the sanctity of the one buried in this holy shrine in his/her absence as in his/her presence. I know that Your Messenger and vicegerents are alive and given sustenance by You. They see my standing place, hear my words, and answer my salutation.²²

The four Imams who have given dignity to Baqie cemetery are Imam Hasan, Imam Sajjad, Imam Baqir, and Imam Sadiq (as):

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنَا زِيَارَتَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَشَفَاعَتَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ.

O Allah, grant us their visitation in this world and their intercession in the Hereafter.

The Martyrs of the Battle of Uhud

This religion under whose shade we have taken shelter and in the light of which we have come to know God, the Holy Qur'an, and the Ahl ul-Bayt have not reached us easily. Only does God know how many devoted persons sacrificed their lives, suffered hardships, and went through calamities in order to safeguard this religion and hand it over to us as it is.

We, who hear the life-giving call of 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger,' from mosques' minarets, hold glorious congregational prayer in mosques, and hold mourning ceremonies for Imam Husayn (as), are rarely aware of the tragic events that happened to Islam and Muslims in the early days of our religion.

Hence, it is necessary for our younger generation to study the history of the early days of Islam to see what sacrifices were made in defense of Islam and the Holy Qur'an. We should both follow their ways and visit their graves to pay homage to them.

Some of those pioneers who sacrificed their lives in the way of God are the martyrs of the battle of Uhud, may Allah be pleased with them, who bravely fought for Islam when it, as well as the Messenger of God were isolated, lost their lives, found eternal life, and made us indebted to them forever.

Therefore, we stand by their graves and say:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَنْصَارَ دِينِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْصَارَ رَسُولِهِ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ السَّلَامُ. سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنَعَمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ. أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ اخْتَارَكُمْ لِدِينِهِ وَاصْطَفَاكُمْ لِرَسُولِهِ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّكُمْ قَدْ جَاهَدْتُمْ فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ وَذَبَبْتُمْ عَنِ دِينِ اللَّهِ.

“Peace be upon you, O helpers of the religion of Allah and helpers of His Messenger (peace be upon him and his progeny). Peace be upon you for your forbearance. What an excellent habitation the Hereafter is. I bear witness that Allah has chosen you for His religion and for Him Messenger. I bear witness that you fought for the sake of Allah a true fighting and defended the religion of Allah and His

Prophet.”23

The honorable uncle of the Holy Prophet, Hamza, had an important role in helping the religion of God and His Messenger. Hence, among the martyrs of Uhud, he has such great rank about whom the Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

مَنْ زَارَنِي وَلَمْ يَزُرْ قَبْرَ عَمِّي حَمَزَةَ فَقَدْ جَفَانِي.

Whoever visits my grave but does not visit the grave of my uncle Hamza, has indeed been unkind to me.

So, we should pay homage to him by saying:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا عَمَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا خَيْرَ
الشُّهَدَاءِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَسَدَ اللَّهِ وَأَسَدَ رَسُولِهِ... وَأَنْتَ مِمَّنْ أَمَرَنِي اللَّهُ بِصِلَتِهِ
وَحَثَّنِي عَلَى بَرِّهِ وَدَلَّنِي عَلَى فَضْلِهِ وَهَدَانِي لِحُبِّهِ وَرَغَّبَنِي فِي الْوِفَادَةِ إِلَيْهِ وَالْهَمْنِي
طَلَبَ الْحَوَائِجَ عِنْدَهُ.

“Peace be upon you, O uncle of the Messenger of Allah. Peace be upon you, O the best of martyrs. Peace be upon you, O the lion of Allah and the lion of the Messenger of Allah... and you are one of those with whom Allah has commanded me to have relation, to whom Allah has enjoined me to do good, to whose virtue and friendship He has guided me, and with whose visitation and asking my needs from him, Allah has inspired me.”24

Conclusion of the Journey

Here our spiritual journey comes to an end. God willing, we will return to our countries with our hearts purified from wrongdoings and our souls illuminated with the light of knowledge of God and His friends. We ask God through His Sacred House, the affinity of His Messenger and the pure and immaculate Household, and His grace to accept our Hajj, and make the rest of our lives safe from the temptations of Satan under the shelter of Imam Mahdi (as). Also, safeguard our children from moral deviations.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَارْزُقْنَا حَجَّ بَيْتِكَ الْحَرَامِ وَزِيَارَةَ قَبْرِ نَبِيِّكَ
وَالْأُمَّةِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ وَلَا تَخْلِينَا يَا رَبَّنَا مِنْ تِلْكَ الْمَشَاهِدِ الشَّرِيفَةِ
وَالْمَوَاقِفِ الْكَرِيمَةِ مَا أَبْقَيْتَنَا.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ الطَّاهِرِينَ.

O God, send peace and blessings upon Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad (saw) and grant us pilgrimage to Your Sacred House and visitation of the graves of Your Prophet and the Imams (as) in every year. Do not deprive us, O Lord, of visiting such dignified and sacred places.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and greetings of Allah be upon Muhammad and his pure and immaculate progeny.

It seems that ‘they’ in this narration refers to those who antagonize the Prophet’s household, and the reason why their eating, dressing, and marriage are illegal is because they refrain from paying the obligatory tax of Khums. In this regard many narrations are reported. Imam ‘Ali (as) is quoted as saying:

هَلَكَ النَّاسُ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَفُرُوجِهِمْ لِأَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يُؤَدُّوا إِلَيْنَا حَقَّنَا. أَلَا وَإِنَّ شِيعَتَنَا مِنْ ذَلِكَ فِي حِلٍّ.

People perish in matters related to their eating and marriage. This is because they do not fulfill our rights that are divinely incumbent upon them. Our Shia are released from the fulfillment of such rights.²⁵

Imam Sadiq (as) is quoted as saying:

النَّاسُ كُلُّهُمْ يَعْيشُونَ فِي فَضْلِ مَظْلَمَتِنَا. أَلَا إِنَّا أَحَلَّلْنَا شِيعَتَنَا مِنْ ذَلِكَ.

All people are plunging in the wronging against us. We however have released our Shia –adherents– from being involved in such wronging.

1. Duaa at-Tawassul

2. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 166

3. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 199 (as quoted from Ibn Shathan’s al-Manaaqib)

4. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 172 (as quoted from Sheikh at-Tusi’s al-Amaali).

5. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 185 (as quoted from al-Mahaasin).

6. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 196 (as quoted from Bisharat al-Mustafa).

7. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 199 (as quoted from Sheikh Saduq’s Fadhaail ush-Shia).

8. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 202 (as quoted from Sheikh at-Tusi’s al-Amaali).

9. See Fiqh ur-Ridha

10. See Mustadrak ul-Wasaail; Kitab al-Hajj Section: Visatation p. 189

11. See Mustadrak ul-Wasaail; Kitab al-Hajj Section: Visitation p. 189
12. See al-Kafi; vo. 4 Kitab al-Hajj, p. 549
13. See Mustadrak ul-Wasaail; Kitab al-Hajj, section: Visitation p. 189
14. See Mustadrak ul-Wasaail; Kitab al-Hajj
15. See Mustadrak ul-Wasaail; Kitab al-Hajj, section: Visitation p. 189
16. See al-Wafi; vol. 2 section: Ziyarat p. 196
17. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 301
18. See Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 27 p. 300 (as quoted from Kamil uz-Ziyarat)
19. Ziyarat al-Jami'a al-Kabira
20. Ziyarat al-Jami'a al-Kabira
21. See al-Muhaddith al-Qummi's Bayt ul-Ahzaan; 8
22. Part of the Permission of Entering the Holy Shrines (as quoted from al-Kaf'ami's)
23. Ziyarat of the martyrs of (the battle of) Uhud
24. Ziyarat of Hamza
25. see al-Wafi; vol. 2 Section: Khums, p.42

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