

IRAQ GUIDE

Bismillah Alrahman Alraheem

(IZHAR-E-MAWADDAT)

Introduction

Iraq was known as Mesopotamia (from the Greek between the rivers) until the end of the First World War. The region is thought to contain the legendary Garden of Eden and is where Ur, Babylon and other historic and religious sites are located.

Following the end of the First World War and the end of of Turkish Ottoman rule, Iraq was placed under British administration in 1920 by a League of Nations mandate. In 1932, the area achieved independence as a Kingdom with Britain retaining military bases and rights of transit for its forces until the overthrow of the monarchy.

A Republic was declared in 1958 after a military coup. Saddam Hussein took control in 1979. After his demise, the country became a parliamentary democracy following ratification of the country's constitution on 15 October 2005.

Iraq has a land area of 432,162 square kilometres and borders Jordan to the west, Syria to the northwest, Turkey to the north, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to the south and Iran to the east.

Iraq is composed of 18 governorates of provinces. These are Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, Ninewah, Qadissiya, Salah al Din, Sulaymaniyah, Thi Qar and Wassit.

Iraq's population is estimated at 30 million with an average age of 20.6 years. The population is 97% Muslim. Main ethnic groups are Arab and Kurds but Iraq also has distinctive Turcoman, Chaldean, Assyrian, Armenian, Bahai, Mandeian and Yazidi Communities.

Main Religion: Islam (60-65% Shia and 32-37% Sunni) approx..

Principal Cities (by population)

Baghdad (capital) (9.5 million)

Mosul (3 million)

Basrah (2.3 million)

Erbil (1.8 million)

Sulaymaniyah (1.8 million)

Kirkuk (1.2 million)

Ramadi (700,000)

Fallujah (850,000)

Karbala (800,000)

Najaf (800,000)

Dahuk (600,000)

Zubayr (600,000)

Al Hillah (510,000)

Amarah (450,000)

Kut (450,000)

Tal Afar (450,000)

Baquba (410,000)

The 2005 constitution guarantees Iraqis basic rights with an independent judiciary. The president protects the constitution and unity of the state, while the Prime minister is the direct executive authority and Commander-in-chief; he is nominated by the Council of Representatives.

The Head of State is president Jalal Talabani since 6 April, 2005. The Head of Government is prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki since 20 May 2006. Negotiations for a new coalition government have been going on.

- You are the only one responsible for your security, and this should never be delegated to anyone else.
- Keep in regular contact with family & friends via the internet or phone.
- Avoid any place that might present attractive target to terrorists such as Military Bases, Govt; Buildings and large crowds.

Register your whereabouts with your country's embassy in Baghdad.

British embassy; 07901911684 www.britishembassy.gov.uk/iraq

britishconsulbaghdad@yahoo.co.uk address; Baghdad Int. zone

Consular section, ocean cliffs, (opp.Alaheed Hotel, International zone, Baghdad). Tel; (964)(0) 79013609060 or 7901935149/ +1 9143609060

Office hours; GMT; sun-thu 0500-1300/ local time; 0800-1600.

For gen. enquiries pl contact Iraq group, foreign and commonwealth office, London, SW1a 2AH Tel; 020 70081500. Email; iraqtraveladvice@fco.gov.uk

Money; With a few rare exceptions, Iraq is a cash country. You should plan to bring enough cash preferably USD or GBP to last your entire trip. The official unit of currency is the Iraqi Dinar (ID).

Official Name: Republic of Iraq.

Electricity; electrical current is 230AC, 50 HZ. Wall sockets are the three prong British type plug.

Insurance; Instant quote; www.aaib-insurance.com

Tel; +96265503222 fax; 65503223 email; admin@aaib-insurance.com

You can take just seconds before departure or on arrival.

Website for Iraq News; www.albawaba.com

www.aswataliraq.info / www.iraqembassy.org.uk click on news.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14714095

CARGO; www.Cma-cgm.com 3rd largest shipping co. in the world.

Private Jet; www.dayenjet.com

Security; www.erinys.net

Business news; www.iraq-business.com

Tourism minister; LIWA SUMAISEM wants to boost eco-tourism

www.webuildiraq.org (good website)

Can I buy land in Iraq?

An amendment law passed in oct. 2009 allows foreigners to own land for housing developments, excluding hotel projects. Cost \$50k for 100 sq. meters each. Defaf karbala city project.

Health;

Malaria is endemic to some rural areas in the north and in Basra province in the south. As a precaution you should only drink bottled water and as

far as possible ensure good food hygiene. Limited medical facilities are available there. In the event of serious accident or illness an evacuation by sir ambulance may be required.

Weather;

During the months of December, January, February and March are very cold. You need thermal undergarments, winter coat & gloves.

March, April, September and October are pleasant months.

May, June, July and August are very hot months. (Need a Mask for dust storm).Najaf:

160 km south of Baghdad. 2.35 m high golden minarets.

Karbala:

108 km southwest of Baghdad. In AD 680 Battle of Karbala.

NAJAF AL ASHRAF

Najaf is about 80 kilometers from Karbala. 160 kilometers south of Baghdad. It has been narrated that there was a huge mountain where the city of Najaf is now. When Prophet Nooh A.S. son refused to embark in the ark, he got on that mountain thinking it would save him from drowning. This incident is narrated in Holy Quran.

Prophet Nooh prayed to the Almighty Allah to save his son but Allah's reply was that he could not accept his prayers as his son had disobeyed Allah's instructions to get into this ship.

The mountain suddenly fell into pieces and an ocean gushed out. This ocean called Nay. After many years the dried up and the place was called Nay-Jaff (dry ocean). Later it came to be known as Najaf. Another narration of Najaf means " the place that is hard for water to reach, since it is on high ground". It is made up of old city and the modern city.

It is also the city of Hawza-e-Ilmiyya for Ulama's and many renowned ulamas like Ayatullah Burujardi, Mohsin Hakeem, Abul Qasim al khoe are buried in and around the Holy Haram of Imam Ali A.S.

The Islamic Seminary founded by sheikh Tusi in 448 AH/1056 ad, became the most important religious school in the world catering for religious students from all over the Muslim world. The method of instruction is unique as the student has full freedom in selecting his tutor, topic and lecture times. The student is awarded the highest degree – Ijtihad after passing three stages; the introduction, discussions based on certain books and finally discussions without relying on a single book. The final stage is the most important and only 3 percent of students are successful. Tutition is free and the religious authority gives financial support, books and other facilities. There are 27 religious schools in Najaf.

The head of the Marjaiyyah at present is Syed Ali-Al Hussaini al-Sistani, who came to Najaf in 1951 to study religion and lives in a small house in the Buraq quarter of the old city about two hundred meters from the shrineof Imam ali A.S. The syed has a wide network of representatives inside and outside Iraq who keep him in touch with developments in various fields. He also runs a large number of religious schools and cultural foundations.

Najaf has 126 mosques in total. There is no quarter or street without a mosque which could be small for the locals or large and is attended by visitors to Najaf. The Imams of these mosques are normally led by distinguished scholars. The most prominent scholars and well known families in Najaf have their own mosques, the most famous being; Al-tusi to the north of the shrine in Al-Amarah quarter, Al-Hindi in Rasool st. to the south of the shrine. The story of this masjid is that they announced that the opening or foundation stone should be performed by that Alim who has never missed his prayer in his life. This indian man came forward and thus this masjid is called Hindi. Al-Hammamah on the left side of the road between Najaf and Kufa. Al shakiry mosque in Imam Ali street at the entrance to Najaf and Kashif Al-ghita mosque in Al-Amarah.

There are many private libraries belonging to religious families, such as the library of Ali Kashif Al-Ghita, Hadi Kashif Al-Ghita, Bahr Al Uloom and Qazwini. The famous public libraries are: Imam al Hakim library in Alrasool st., Al alameen library in Al Tusi mosque, Al Haidary library and Ameer al Momineen library in al Huwaish quarter. This library contains more than half a million books and manuscripts in all fields of knowledge. One of its rare books is a Quran written by Imam Ali himself in kufi style with no dots on the letters. The copy written on the deer skin, has the stamp of his son Imam Hassan A.s. which proves its authenticity. The land of Najaf is famous for its precious stones especially its beautifully

shaped, transparent pearls- Dur Al Najaf. Rings made from these pearls are believed to bestow many benefits on the wearer.

HAZRAT IMAM ALI A.S.

He was the son of Hazrat Abu Talib A.S. and bibi Fatima bint Asad. The prophet of Islam raised him. He was always protecting the Holy Prophet during his prophetic mission. He was married to the only daughter of the prophet of Allah (SAWW) Syeda Fatima S.A. and he was the proud father of Imam Hassan A.s. and Imam Hussain A.S. Bibi Syeda Zainab S.A. and Hazrat Abbas A.S.

He was the hero of many of the battles of Islam. It is narrated that the prophet on many occasions said that " Ali is never separated from the Truth and the Truth is never separated from him."

At Ghadeer the Prophet proclaimed Imam Ali a.s to be his brother and the leader of Muslims after him, but the people of the time ignored this and chose another leader whilst Imam Ali A.s. was busy with the burial rituals for the Prophet.

When the third elected leader was killed the people of the time begged Imam Ali a.s. to be the ruler. He accepted and ruled with justice and truth in the Islamic way.

On the 19th Ramazan in the masjid of Kufa (while he was praying his Prayers) he was struck by Abdul Rahman Ibne Muljim (may the curse of Allah fall upon him) with a poisonous sword. He passed away two days later and is buried in Najaf where you will visit inshallah to pay your respect.

Best advice of Imam Ali A.S. to his sons: "My advice to you is to be conscious of Allah and steadfast in your religion. Do not yearn for the world and do not be seduced by it. Do not resent anything you have missed in it. Proclaim the truth, work for the next world. Oppose the oppressor and support the oppressed". Only Iran acts upon this advice as a country.

SHRINE OF IMAM ALI (A.S.)

The Imam Ali shrine is not just any Holy site. It's the Shia Equivalent of the SISTINE CHAPEL. The grave of Imam Ali A.S. was first discovered by

Dawud Bin Ali Al-Abbasi around 131 A.h. Harun Al Rasheed found it around 170 A.H. / 786 A.D. whilst on a hunting trip. He ordered the building of a dome of red mud. Today the shrine consists of the courtyard, the halls and the four sided tomb which is covered by a Gold Dome and two gold minarets.

Inside the shrine are also the tombs of the prophets, saints and the companions of the prophet. The most famous include:

PROPHET ADAM A.S.

The first prophet of Allah, was prophet Adam A.S. who was created from clay by the spirit of Allah (S.W.T). As soon as he was created, all the angels were ordered to prostrate to him. All obeyed except Shaitaan (Iblees). Shaitaan was then ordered to leave Heaven, which he did. However, requested Allah to grant him life as long as human beings live on earth. His wish was granted.

The graves of Hazrat Adam and Hazrat Nooh Prophet are located near that of Imam Ali A.S. This shrine is distinguished by its amazing architecture. The architectural form is such that if the shadow of the sun reaches a certain point of the Plaza, it indicates mid day prayer. In addition, the sunrise is directly over the tomb in summer and in winter.

In Najaf city you will see Turbans everywhere. The effects of Religious institutions on the life of the city runs very deep. Centuries of study, research and dialogue has resulted in a rich literary tradition. Najaf took pride in producing numerous Religious and literary figures, poets and Historians as well as political Activists and Leaders in Iraq. No wonder Najaf has been chosen as the city of Islamic culture for 2012. Najaf is not just another Iraqi city. It is the city of the dead where cemeteries go on forever, a place so sacred that every devout shia dreams of being buried there. The cemetery of Wadi al-Salam is the largest in the Muslim world. The tombs of Nabi Hud and Nabi Saleh are in the city's cemetery. Grand Ayatullah Syed Ali Sistani lives just near Haram of Imam Ali A.S.

PROPHET NOOH A.S.

The people were giving Prophet Nooh A.S. a very hard time and were not prepared to accept that they should believe in one God. Nabi Nooh when got tired of them and could not see the numbers increasing asked Allah to punish them. So, Allah asked him to build an Ark (ship) on which only the believing people could board with various kind of animals and birds. The disbelievers including one of his sons refused to board the Ark,

stayed behind on the mountain. The mountain crushed and all the disbelievers who took refuge in it were drowned.

SCHOLARS BURIED IN THE SAHAN (COURTYARD)

IBN AL MUTAHHAR A.R. (ALLAMA HILLI)

He was born on 29th Ramadhan 648 A.H. in Hilla. He was the nephew and student of Muhaqqiq e Hilli for Fiqh and then proceeded to study from other masters of his era, including Khawaja Nasiruddin Tusi who taught him philosophy and Logic. Later, he sat with the sunni scholars to study their Fiqh. He was genius child achieving the position of a Mujtahid at the age of 9-10 years. It is reported that as a very young child, when chased by his tutor-his uncle, he used to recite the Ayat of Wajib sajdah, his uncle would have to stop and do sajdah whilst he ran away. He was not baligh (15 years of age) therefore, it was not wajib on him to do sajdah.

His works include several memorable books and treatises on Fiqh, Usul, Kalam, Logic, philosophy and rijal. His book Tabsiratul Muta'allimeen, is still being studied by the students of Hawza today. Later Fuqaha have written extensive commentaries on Allama's works. He died on 21 Muharram 726 AH and is buried in Najaf.

MUQADDIS ARDEBELI A.R.

AHMED BIN MOHAMMED ARDABILI

From Ardabil he was also known as Muhaqqiq Ardabil. (The investigator of Ardabil). He is known for his piety thus the title Muqaddas. It is reported that for travelling between Samaraa, karbala and Najaf he used to travel on a hired donkey. Once he was given a letter to deliver to someone in Najaf on his way back from Karbala. The people got worried on Muqaddas Ardabil had not arrived in Najaf at the expected time. Many hours later he arrived in Najaf exhausted walking with the donkey. When he was asked about the delay, he said he walked all the way as he had not had permission from the owner of the donkey to carry the extra weight of the letter. He was respected very much by all. Shah Abbas Safavi of Iran wanted him to come and live in Iran but Ahmed Ardabil would not agree. Once a fugitive Mumin from Iran came to Muqaddas Ardabil in Najaf, asking him to write to the shah recommending a pardon, he wrote:

“ The holder of temperory rule, Abbas is advised that although the man was initially a wrong doer, he now repents. If you forgive him, Allah may

forgive some of your lapses”, from the slave of the Master of Wilaya (Imam Ali A.S.) Ahmed Ardabil. In reply Shah Abbas Safavi wrote: “ I bring to your esteemed notice that Abbas has done the service ordered by you feeling deeply obliged. I hope you will not forget this devotee of yours in your duas”, from a dog on the threshold of Ali A.S.-Abbas. He stayed in Najaf to strengthen the Hawza. After shaheed Thani he was the leading Marjaa. He died in Najaf in Safar 933 A.H.

It is narrated that he once went to get water to perform Wudhoo from a well. Instead of water a treasure came out. He put them back saying that he wanted water for wudhoo not treasures.

SHAIKH ABU JAFFER MOHAMMED IBN HASSAN TUSI A.R.

SHAIKH UL TAYFA

Two great ulama who bear the title TUSI. The other one is Khawaja Nassir Uddin Tusi A.R. They are unrelated but both were born in the Iranian city of Tus. There is a difference of 200 years between their eras. He was born 385 A.H. in Tus (Iran). His early years were spent in Tus where he was taught by his father who was a great Alim of his time. In 408 A.H. (1017 AD) he moved to Baghdad to pursue further studies and became the student of sheikh Mufeed. When Shaikh Mufeed died he studied under Syed Murtaza (Alamul Huda). He soon became syed Murtaza’s star student. After the death syed Murtaza in 436 A.H, he became the leading shia alim and Marjaa of the shia world.

In 448 A.H. he moved to Najaf due to the riots between shias and sunnis. It is he who laid the foundation of Islamic knowledge in Najaf establishing Madrasas and making it a flourishing learning centre. Through his countless benefitted, from whom 300 became mujtahedeen. He is the author of two of the four main books of Ahadith – Al Istibsar and al Tahzeeb. The later contains 393 chapters with 13590 Ahadith. His authority and impact was such that after his death for 80 years No alim gave any fatwa which were different from Shaikh Tusi’s. One other reason was also that his book Al Nihaya was disputed by some Ulama from Baghdad. They came to Najaf to resolve the dispute asking for help in the Haram of Imam Ali A.S. All three saw Imam Ali in their dream authorising the book. He died in Najaf on 22nd Muharram 460 A.H. (1067AD.) at the age of 75 years. He was buried in his home as per his will. The house was converted into a mosque which was later incorporated with the Haram of Imam Ali A.S. Today it is difficult to

identify the original mosque but there is a gate of the Haram on the side known as Bab Al Tusi.

WADI AL SALAM

MAQAM IMAM ZAINUL ABEDEEN A.S.

This is the place where Imam Zainul Abedeen A.S. used to spend hours in prayers. He used to like this place because it faces the shrine of Imam Ali A.S. Zuwar visit this place and recite Munajaat.

The cemetery is situated on the north east of Najaf and is one of the oldest and largest cemeteries in the world. The cemetery is divided into two parts. The old one and new. In addition to the normal graves there are vaults with two to three sub floors underneath and each floor contains a line of crypts which number between five and eight.

PROPHET HUD

The people of his time were very rich and due to their wealth they were very strong and worshipped idols. Prophet Hud A.s. repeatedly warned them to give up worshipping the idols and to turn towards one God but they did not listen. Allah (SWT) punished them and they were all killed except Prophet Hud A.S. and a few believers. His tomb is in Wadi al Salam in Najaf.

PROPHET SALEH

Allah sent prophet Saleh A.S. to Thamood. Allah sent a she camel and instructed prophet Saleh A.S. to tell the people of Thamood that they should not kill it. They did not listen and killed the She camel. Allah SWT punished them by sending an earthquake and fire and they were all destroyed. His tomb is at Wadi Al Salam in Najaf.

It is said that 370 prophets and 600 successor are buried in Najaf.

MAQAM IMAM MEHDI (AFS)

Imam zamana visits this site when he goes to pay his respects at wadi Al Salam.

MAQAM IMAM JAFFER ALSADIQ A.S.

This is also in the boundaries of Wadi Al Salam

SHRINE OF JANAB IBRAHIM IBNE HASSAN-E-MUTHANNA IBNE IMAM HASSAN A.S.

SOME TOP MARAJE UZZAM ARE BURRIED IN NAJAF:

Ayatullah Mirza Sayyid Mohammed Hassan Ibn Mahmud Shirazi A.R.

Syed Mohsin Ibn Mehdi Al Tabbatabae Al Hakim A.R., Ayatullah Syed Abul Qasim Al Khoee. He was buried in the courtyard of the Al Khadhraa masjid in Najaf (next to the Haram of Imam Ali A.S.). Ayatullah Mohammed Baqir Alsadr.

MASJID OF KUMAIL IBN ZIYAD A.R.

Imam Ali had a companion from Yemen. His name was Kumail Ibn Ziyad Al Nakhaee, who lost no opportunity to acquire knowledge from his Great Teacher. Everything he learned, he endeavoured to put into practice and taught it to as many people as he could. Kumail asked Imam Ali A.s. to teach him Dua of Nabi Khizr. Imam told him to write down this dua and Imam dictated to him. Imam told him that one should recite the dua every Thursday night if that was possible, if not once a month. If that was difficult then at least once a year on the 15th of Shabaan and if that was difficult then at least once in a life time, for its benefits are vast. Hajjaj summoned Kumail because in his days it was a crime to be a shia and it warranted death. Hajjaj the governor ordered Kumail " disown Ali to save yourself". Kumail replied "show me a way better than that of Imam Ali A.s.". Hajjaj ordered his men to behead Kumail. He is buried in Najaf. Every Thursday night the sound of Dua-E-Kumail which is also called Dua E Nabi Khizr, internalises the brave companion of Imam Ali A.S.

Grave of Shaikh Ahmed ALWAEELI; He was buried in the courtyard in one of the room's on right side. He was the top lecturer in the shia Arab world and Imam Khomaini called him a mobile library. His lectures are still being relayed on arab channel and are full of knowledge. Syed Ammar Naqshwani got inspiration from this Khateeb R.A.

MASJID HANNANA

This masjid is between Kufa and Najaf. It was a church at one time. It was here that Imam Hassan A.S. and Imam Hussain A.S. were passing with the coffin of Imam Ali A.S. to bury him, saw that the pillars inclined towards Imam Ali's coffin in respect.

It is narrated that when Imam Hussain was martyred on the 10th of Muharram, Bannu Ummayad's army carried his Holy Head on a plate. When the army passed by this church, now masjid, the priest noticed that

the face of Imam Hussain A.s. was shining with light (noor) was coming out and was reciting verses of Holy Quran. So the priest asked them to leave the head one night with him. He addressed the Head of Imam Hussain "who are You?". Imam replied I am Hussain Bin Ali and my grandfather is Prophet Mohammed SAWW and Bannu Ummaya killed me in Karbala. The priest was moved with the reply and he accepted Islam.

KUFA

It is a city in Iraq about 170 kilometers south of Baghdad, 10 kilometers north east of Najaf. It is located on the banks of the Euphrates River. Kufa was the Capital of Muslim Ummah at the time of Imam Ali A.S. for over 3 years.

MASJID KUFA

It is one of the oldest mosques built in the 7th Century. It is the place where Prophet Nooh A.S. constructed his Ark by the command of God. It is narrated that many prophets have visited this Masjid and have performed salaah, that is why there are many places where zawar recite ziyaraat and perform tow or four Rakaat salat in units of 2. If one performs a wajib salaah he gets the thawab (reward) of one accepted Hajj. And it is equivalent to a thousand Rakaat of salaah prayed elsewhere. If one prays one mustaheb Salaah, he gets the thawab of one accepted Umrah. More than 1070 prophets and their successors have prayed here. Imam Al Asr AFS will come and pray here after his Zuhur. Even to sit you will get thawab of doing Ibadah. You are allowed to pray full salaah or Qasr, its your wish.

ENTERING THE MASJID

It is better to enter through Baab Ul Feel (Elephant door) behind the mosque. Idhn al dukhool: seeking permission to enter the mosque.

O'Allah! I am standing at the door of one of the houses of your prophet and family of your prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

May I enter, O Prophet of Allah? May I enter, O the Proof of Allah? May I enter O the angels of Allah? As you cross the threshold (with your right foot), enter with humility reciting:

In the name of Allah and by Allah in the path of Allah and on the religion of the prophet of Allah peace be upon him and his family. O' Allah forgive me and have mercy on me and turn repentant towards me for you are the most forgiving and merciful. After entering there are several recommended places to go to and pray 2 units of Rakaat Salaat, tasbeeh of syeda Fatima A.S. and pray for ones needs.

1. Almazwala: It's a pillar to know by it's shadow the zuhur prayer time (ancient clock).
2. Maqam e Hazrat Ibrahim A.s.: First Rakaat Alhamd and qul. Second; Alhamd and suratul Qadr. This is the same prophet that built Kaba in Makkah and was ready to sacrifice his son Hazrat Ismaeel at Mina.
3. Maqam e Hazrat Khizr (p.b.u.h.): 4 rakaat salat 2 units each. He is still alive and one of his miracles is that when leans on a dry stick it becomes fresh green. He is same prophet performed some acts and Hazrat Musa accompanied him for a short while.
4. DAKATUL Qadha: It is narrated during the time of Imam Ali A.s. a group of people wanted to stone a women to death because they thought that she had committed adultery. Her stomach was bulging like that of a pregnant women. They wanted to get Imam Ali's fatwa. Imam Ali asked them to bring a big tub and fill it with mud or water in some narrations, and put a curtain round it. Then he asked the women to go and sit in this tub. After a while big worm came out of her tummy smelling the mud in the tub. Her stomach returned to her normal shape. Thus it was proved that she was not pregnant. Imam Ali A.s. explained to her brothers that when she was young this insect got inside her and was growing inside. Imam saved a life and generation through his wisdom.
5. COURT OF IMAM ALI A.S.: the court of Imam Ali A.s. where there used to be the Ayah of Quran: INNA ALLAHA YAMORO BIL ADLE WAL EHSAAN (Allah enjoins you to act with justice and goodness). This is the place used to conduct his daily affairs of Muslim nation. This was his head office. Recite 2 rakaats followed by your hajjat.
6. Well of Hazrat Nooh A.S.: This was the oven where you bake bread (Naan). Allah performed a miracle that the storm started from this oven and later it became a well. Now it is a pond in the centre of the Masjid Courtyard which is in a round shape.
7. MAQAM HAZRAT NABI MOHAMMED (P.B.U.H.A.P.): Rasullulah S.A.W.W. stopped here in his way to Jeruselum during his Meraj. Angel Jibraeel showed him the place and he asked to pray salaat. 2 units of prayers to be performed here.

8. MAQAM HAZRAT ADAM A.S.: It is at this maqam Nabi Adam came and did repentance (tawba). 60,000 angels descend here everyday to pray. Recite 4 rakaat here in units of 2. Say 70 times YA SAYEEDEE in sajdah.
9. MAQAM HAZRAT (ANGEL) JIBRAEEL: A blessed place as quoted by many Ahadith. It is narrated through narrations that Imam ali used to ask people "ask me any question before you lose me". Saad bin abi waqas father of ummar e saad (LA) asked how many hair are there on my head? Imam replied if I answer it, do you have the gauge to find out exactly how many are there? In the same court one person stood up and asked: " where is angel Jabraeel now?" Imam looked right, left, back, up and straight. He could not see Jabraeel anywhere so he replied: You are Jabraeel. He flew at that time. Imam proved his foresight and knowledge through this incident. It is true that Imam Ali a.s. is the gate of knowledge.
10. MAQAM IMAM JAFFER SADIQ A.S.: This is the place where Hazrat Imam Jaffer Sadiq A.s. used to stay and pray. Recite 2 rakaat namaz here.
11. MAQAM IMAM ZAINUL ABEDEEN A.S.: This is the place where Hazrat Imam Zainul abedeem A.s. used to stay and pray when visiting Masjid al Kufa. Recite 2 rakaat salaah followed by tasbeeh of sayyeda followed by "ya sayyedee x3 salli alaa mohammed wa ale mohammed waghferlee in sajda."
12. MAQAM E HAZRAT NOOH: This is the place inside Masjid e kufa where the Ark of Hazrat Nooh A.s. stood. Recite 4 rakaat salaah followed by tasbeeh in 2 rakaat units.
13. MAQAM E ZARBAT ON IMAM ALI (STRIKE): Mehrab of Imam Ali A.S.: This is where the final death blow was struck by the sword of IBN Muljim soaked with rare n expensive poison on 19th Ramazan. He was killed due to his severe justice and love of God.
14. MAQAM E IBADAT OF IMAM ALI A.S.: Sounds of 1000 Takbiratul Ihram used to come from this maqam prayed by Imam Ali A.S.
15. SHRINE OF MUKHTAR AL THAQAFI:

Mukhtar was born in 1AH and was the son of Abu Ubayda Al-Thaqafi. It is said that his father prayed to Allah to grant him a son who would be remembered for doing an honourable deed in this world. Mukhtar lived in Kufa and was out of town when Muslim was killed. When he returned he was chained and put into dungeon with other shias. He was only allowed out to watch the prisoners of the Ahlulbayt when they were paraded in the town of Kufa with the

heads of Karbala raised on spears. When Mukhtar saw this he vowed that he would not rest until he had avenged the killers.

In prison he met a close companion of Imam Ali A.s. called Maitham Altammar. Imam Ali had taught Maitham many things amongst them the knowledge of being able to interpret dreams and some future events. Maitham told Mukhtar that he would avenge the killers of Karbala. After much planning and effort Mukhtar was released from prison. In dhulhijjah of 63 AH, an army sent by Yazeed and led by Muslim Aqaba ran havoc through Madina killing even those who took refuge in the mosque of the prophet SAWW. Dogs were tied on the mimbar of the Prophet and the streets flowed with blood. The army advanced towards Makkah but on the way Muslim Aqaba became ill and died. A new commander took over and begins his attack on makkah, even forgetting Kaba. Mukhtar and his men succeeded in slowing down the attack. Just as the army of Yazeed were getting closer to destroying the Kaba, news came through that Yazeed has died in Damascus on the 14th of Rabi ul awal 64 AH. He had gone on the hunting trip and never returned. A search party looked for him but found only his horse and part of his body. There is no trace of his grave.

Mukhtar went to Madina to ask permission from Imam Zainul Abedeen A.S. to go on a mission to catch the killers of Kaba. Through his uncle Mohammed Hanafiyya, Son of Imam ali gave him permission. Mukhtar returned to Kufa only to be imprisoned again. When he was once again free, he soon made it known that he was looking for someone to help him catch the killers of Karbala. He found Ibrahim who was son of Malik Ashtar. They worked out a plan and decided the best way was to gain control of governorship of Kufa for many of the killers were in high governmental positions. In Rabi ul awal 66AH, Mukhtar brought about a revolution and gained control of Kufa. He then sent out to catch the killers.

It is reported that Mukhtar managed to bring justice about 18,000 killers of Karbala during his time as governor of Kufa. He was martyred on 15th Ramazan 67Ah and is buried behind Hazrat Muslim Ibn Aqeel A.s.

MASJID OF MUSLIM IBN AQEEL:

Just outside the boundary of Masjid e kufa is the shrine of Muslim Ibn Aqeel A.S. He was the cousin of Imam Hussain who had sent him to Kufa as his deputy before him but was killed by Yazid's men.

SHRINE OF HANI BIN URWA:

He supported Muslim Ibn Aqeel in Kufa and gave shelter in his home. Hani too was then killed by the order of Ibn Ziyad and by Yazid's men due to his support to Muslim.

SHRINE OF SYEDA KHADIJA AL KUBRA BINTE IMAM ALI A.S.: sister of Hazrat Abbas a.s.

Just outside Masjid e kufa and across the road is the Rauza of this noble lady.

HOME OF IMAM ALI A.S.

Near Masjid Kufa is the house of Imam Ali A.S. The original home was much smaller. There is a well in the house whose water has curative properties. It is here that Imam breathed his last on the 21st Ramadhan 40 AH. There is an area where he was given ghusl in the house by his sons.

MAITHAM BIN YAHYA AL TAMMAR:

A trader in dates who was a close companion of Imam Ali A.S. He was a righteous man. It is written that Imam Ali A.S. has told him that he would be killed and crucified for not cursing and abusing Imam Ali A.S. He showed him the tree where he would be crucified. After Imam Ali's shahadat, maitham would visit the tree and say: "May Allah bless you O tree; I have been created for you and you are growing for me."

Ubaydallah bin Ziyad arrested Maitham and asked him to curse Imam Ali A.s. He refused. Ibn ziyad imprisoned Maitham and Mukkhtar. Maitham was taken out of the prison and crucified on the same tree at the door of "amr bin Hurayth". Maitham turned the cross into pulpit. He started narrating the ahadith of the ahlulbayt. Ibn ziyad was informed. He feared that Maitham's words would turn the masses against the Ummayyads, he ordered first his tongue to be cut. He was killed ten days before the arrival of Imam Hussain in Karbala.

That palm tree started growing branches beside the main trunk of tree, which is unusual, but it grew and is still there until this day. If the palm tree with all its extensions is cut, at the top it will be noticed that it forms a letter "Allah" in Arabic.

SHRINE OF PROPHET YUNUS NEAR THE RIVER.

MASJID E SA'ASA IBN SAUHAN A.R.

It is believed that here too the head of Imam Hussain A.S. was kept when Yazid was taking the heads of the shohada and Bibi from Karbala to Damascus via Kufa.

MOUSELEUM OF HAZRAT ZAYD IBN SAUHAN A.S. KNOWN AS ZAYD ALSHAHEED.

MASJID SAHLA

It is second most important masjid after Masjid Kufa. Historically this Masjid has been the house of Prophet Idrees, Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Khizr A.S. Imam zamana A.T.F.S. will make this masjid his residence after zuhur. All prophets have prayed here and there is a stone which stores the images of all the prophets. It is said that the heart of every Momin is inclined towards this masjid. Hajjats are fulfilled here. It is recommended to recite Dua e Tawassul here on the night of Tuesday. If a person who is distressed comes to masjid Sahla on the night of Tuesday and prays 2 rakaats between Maghrib salat and Isha salat, his difficulties will be removed.

ENTERING THE MASJID:

Idhn al dukhool; Seek permission to enter the mosque:

O Allah! I am standing at the door of one of the houses of your prophet and the family of your prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

May I enter, O Prophet of Allah? May I enter, O the Proof of Allah?
May I enter, O angels of Allah?

As you cross the threshold with your right foot, enter with humility reciting:

In the name of Allah and By Allahin the path of Allah and on the religion of the Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him and his family. O Allah! Forgive me and have mercy on me and turn repentant towards me for you are most forgiving and merciful.

Recite Ayatul Kursi, Surat unnas and sura Falaq. SubhanAllah x7, walhamdullilahx7, La Ilaha Illa Allah x7, Wallahom Akbarx7.

Then raise your hand and say;

YA MUQALIBAL QULOOB WAL ABSAR, YA SAE ALDUA INNAKA ALA KULLI SHAYEN QADEER.

Go to Sajdah and ask for your Hajaat.

MAQAM E SALEHEEN;

This is the general place for saying your prayers.

MAQAM E HAZRAT IBRAHIM A.S.;

This is the place where Hazrat Ibrahim A.s. used to visit and say his prayers.

MAQAM E HAZRAT IDRIS A.S.:

This is the place where Hazrat Idris A.s. used to visit and perform his prayers.

MAQAM E HAZRAT KHIZR A.S.

This is the place where Hazrat Khizr A.s. used to visit and say his prayers.

MAQAM E ZAINUL ABEDEEN A.S.

MAQAM E HAZRAT IMAM JAFFER SADIQ A.S.

MAQAM E IMAM HUJJAT A.S.

It is the practice of zawar to recite dua e tawassul at this place.

Note: We also take you for a visit and meeting with Ayatullah al Uzma Syed Ali Sistani & Ayatullah Al Uzma Hafiz Bashir Najafi if time permits. You can pay your khums direct to them.

HILLA & ALKIFL

RASHEED AL HIJRI:

He was the companion of Imam Ali A.s. who had come from Yemen to Kufa. He was one of the most important friend of Our Imam. It is narrated that after the shahadat of our 1st Imam, Ubbaydallah bin ziyad sent for Rasheed Al Hijri and asked him to curse Imam Ali A.s. and his sons. When he refused to do so, his hands and feet were cut off. Rashid Al hijri continued to praise Imam Ali A.s. and Ubbaydallah asked him to stop but he would not, so his tongue was cut off.

HAZRAT HAMZA A.S.:

Son of Abul Fazl AlAbbas A.s.

One of Hazrat abbas A.S. son whose name was Ubbaydallah a resident of Madina. He was a great scholar of his time and he left a son named Hassan who also was a great scholar and Hazrat Hamza A.S. happens to be one of his son's. He was the great grandson of Hazrat Abbas A.S.

PROPHET AYUB A.S.

He was the grandson of Prophet Ishaq. Who was son of Prophet Ibrahim and his wife was the grand daughter of Prophet Yusuf A.s. Allah gave him many blessings. He was a wealthy man with large flocks of sheep and a lot of land. He had many children and was well respected by his people. Prophet Ayub A.S. was generous with his wealth and took care of orphans and used to provide food for the poor.

Confident of his patience and steadfastness, Allah tested Ayub A.s. as a lesson for human kind by causing him loss in his property, wealth and children. In the face of this sudden calamity, Ayub A.s. turned to allah with greater intensity then before and devoted himself to worship. He also began to lose his health being afflicted with a severe disease.

Seeing the misfortunes befalling him, his people began saying that he must have done something awful to incur the punishment of Allah and they began to avoid him. Finally he was exiled from his community and had to leave the town. His only companion was his wife. Rahma, who supported them by doing odd jobs in people's

houses. One day shaitan came in the form of a human being to Rahma and told her that he knew of a way to cure her husband of a terrible disease. He told her to take a sheep and slaughter it in his name instead of Allah.

She came back to Nabi ayub and suggested this idea. He told her to go away and leave him alone. He knew that this was shaitan. Ayub turned to Allah and complained about Shaitan's repeated efforts to make him forsake his believes.

(Remember) Ayub when he called to his Lord" I am afflicted with distress and you are the most compassionate of all." So we heard his cry and relieved him of the misery he was in. Surat Ambiya 21:83,84.

Allah accepted hisdua and cured him of all his troubles.(and we said to him) " stamp your foot on the ground. This stream is for you to wash with, and a cool and refreshing drink". And we gave him his family and more like them; a mercy from us and a reminder for those with Understanding. And it was said to him, " Take in your hand a bunch of thin sticks and strike your wife with it, so as not to break your oath. Verily we found him steadfast, an excellent servant. Verily, he turned to us."Surah Saad 38:42-44.

Prophet Ayub A.s. struck the ground with his foot and a stream of water came out. When he washed himself with the water he saw his sickness disappeared and he returned to normal.

MOHAMED IBN ALI A.S.

He is also known as Baqar.

QASIM IBN MUSSA KAZIM A.S.

He is the brother of Imam Reza A.S. who was heard saying that if you cannot visit me in Mashad then you should visit my brother in Iraq.

MASJID MARRAD ALSHAMS:

It is narrated that Imam Ali a.s. was nursing one of his sick son and the time of Asr [assed and started entering into maghrib. The Imam was very sad and looked at the sun. Through the mercy of

Allah SWT the sun reverted to Asr time and the Imam said his Asr Salaat.

BIRTH PLACE OF NABI IBRAHIM

BIKR BIN IMAM ALI A.S.

SHRINE OF PROPHET DANYAL A.S./ NABI ZIL KIFL

ZAID BIN IMAM ZAINUL ABEDEEN A.S.

GRAVE OF PROPHET YOUSHE A.S.

GRAVE OF IMAM HASSAN'S DAUGHTER (SHARIFEA)

KARBALA MUALLA

Karbala e Moalla, started as a small village to grow into a famous city in Iraq, known worldwide since the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain A.S. It is 100 kilometre south west of Baghdad. The name Karbala as taught to our Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. is as being: "the land which will cause many agonies (karb) and afflictions (bala)".

In the centre of the city is the Sacred Shrine of Hazrat Imam Hussain A.S. within a walking distance one may visit the sacred Rauza of Hazrat Abul Fazl AlAbbas A.S. The dome and minarets of both shrines are covered with Gold. It is the same field on which he was martyred on the 10th of Muharram 61AH. Under extremely cruel circumstances with his family and friends after suffering three days of thirst and hunger. It is recommended to be in karbala on a Thursday night.

Imam Baqir A.S. said: If people knew the reward for the ziyarat of Hussain A.s. surely they would have died out of love for it and when enquired as to what exactly The "Thawab" is? Imam explained that whoever goes for the ziyarah has been given the Thawab of 1000 Hajj, 1000 umrah, 1000 martyrs of Badr, 1000 reward for fasting, 1000 reward of sadaqa, reward of freeing 1000 slaves, protection for the whole year and an angel will be appointed to protect him and when he dies angels will attend his burial ceremony.

They will pray for his forgiveness, he will be protected from the squeeze of the grave, question of the grave of munkar and nakeer will be facilitated for him and the gates of Jannah will be opened for him. The book of deeds will be presented to him in his right hand. He will come on the Day of Judgement full of light and his light will be stretched from the East to the west and an announcer would call out: "This is a visitor of the Grave of Hussain A.S." And at that time there will be no one in the field of qiyamah but he would wish that he was a visitor of Imam Hussain A.s.

This great sacrifice ensured the survival of Islam as long as the world exists. It is highly recommended to ask your Hajjat under the Dome, which inshallah will be fulfilled. There are five places where you can recite full salaah even though the condition of ten days is not met. They are in Madina, Makkah, Rauza of Imam Hussain under the Dome-Haram, Masjid Kufa and Masjid Sahla.

These sacred grounds are your home... This city is your abode...This Holy house is your refuge. Fortunate is the one who embarks towards this place...But even more fortunate is the one who disembarks at this place.

There is change of guard ceremony held daily at 1400 (2pm) in the courtyard and they start with tilawat-e-Quran, Ziyarat of Imam Hussain A.s. and Nasheed. Its worth watching. Duas are accepted under the dome of Imam Hussain a.s.

SHRINE OF IMAM HUSSAIN A.S.

1. Grave of Imam Hussain A.s.

2. Grave of Hazrat Ali Akbar A.s. He was Imam Hussain's eldest son. He was 18 years old when he gave his life for Islam on the fields of Karbala. It is narrated that whenever Imam Hussain A.S. wanted to do ziyarat of the Prophet of Allah, he would look at Hazrat Ali Akbar A.s. because of his resemblance to the Holy Prophet. On the morning of Ashura at the time of Fajar salat, Imam Hussain asked him to recite Azaan. He is buried next to Imam Hussain A.S.

3. Ali Asgher- Abdulla Al Radhee A.S.: He was the youngest son of Imam Hussain A.S. who was only 6 months old. He is also known as Abdullah "Tiflan-e-Radhee". When all the relatives and companions of Imam Hussain Were martyred Imam went to

fetch ali Asgher A.s. and told him something in his ears. Immediately, the baby jumped into Imam's arms.

The Imam covered him with his aba and took him towards the army of Yazeed. The army thought that Imam brought Holy Quran and was going to ask for mercy, but instead the Imam put the baby on the hot sand of Karbala and spoke to the army loudly and told them that if the Imam is at fault then the 6 month old baby was not and that they should come and give the baby some water. They did not but instead Harmala (may curse of Allah be on him) pulled a three headed arrow and aimed at the baby piercing his little neck and the arm of Imam Hussain A.S. He too is buried next to our Imam.

4. GANJ-E-SHOHADA: This is a mass grave where all the shohada-e-karbala are buried. It is narrated that even Shah Qassim the son of Imam Hassan A.S. is buried here.

5. QATALGAH: This is the place where Shimr Maloon (may the curse of Allah be upon him) sat on Imam Hussain from the back and martyred him.

6. HAZRAT HABIB IBN MAZAHIR ALASADI: He was a childhood friend of Imam Hussain A.S. When he was surrounded by Yazid's army he sent a letter to Habib informing his situation and asked him to come to his help. Immediately, Habib came to Karbala and went to fight for Islam and was martyred on the day of Ashura. His tomb is just outside one of the doors to the Rauza of Imam Hussain A.S.

7. HAZRAT IBRAHIM BIN MUSA KADHIM (IBRAHIM ALMUJAB): At one time he was the governor of Yemen. He was the grandfather of Syed Murtaza A.R. and syed Razi A.R. He died in Baghdad but was brought to Karbala. He was martyred by the Abbasid caliph. His tomb is just outside the Rauza of Imam Hussain A.S.

8. TILLA – ZAINABIA: This is a small hill facing the Haram of Imam Hussain A.S. slightly on right side if you come out of Bab of qibla (door). It is from this spot that Lady Zainab S.A. witnessed the last stand of her brother, Imam Hussain A.S. on the day of 10th Muharram, 61AH.

9. KHAIMAGAH: This is just behind Tilla –E-Zainabia. Here all the tents of Imam Hussain A.S., his family and friends were pitched. The tent of Hazrat Abbas A.S. was in the front. Imam Hussain A.S. dug a trench around the tents.

10. Bayn ul haramain (between two Shrines): The distance between the Haram of Imam Hussain A.S. and that of Hazrat Abbas A.S. is the same distance that is between Safa and Marwa. The river Euphrates- its off shoot Alqamah runs under the Haram of Hazrat Abbas A.S. without any link to any source by miracle of God.

11. HAZRAT ABBAS A.S.: He was the step brother of Imam Hussain A.S. and his mother `s name is Ummul Banin. When Imam Ali A.s. was on his death bed he called Hazrat Abbas a.s. and put hands in thehands of Imam Hussain a.s. and told Hazrat Abbas that this, pointing to Imam Hussain a.s. is your master and that you are like his slave, so in karbala on the day of Ashura you must help him and fight for Islam until death. Hazrat Abbas a.s. just proved that on the day of Ashura. It is narrated that Imam Ali a.s. never asked from god in his duas for himself except a son to help Imam Hussain a.s. for Karbala. Allah granted him a son and it was Hazrat Abbas a.s. Ask for your Hajjaat with the intercession of Abbas a.s. after reciting the ziyarah, standing there raise your hands in dua and ask Allah for your needs standing in the presence of Abbas a.s. It is open 24 hours. There is change of guard ceremony on Monday and Thursday worth watching at 2pm.

12. ZIYARAT INSIDE KARBALA – 3 HOUR TRIP : Kaf al Abbas: Means the arm of Hazrat Abbas a.s. This is the spot outside his Haram. Here at this spot his left arm was severed.

13. RIGHT ARM: It is situated inside the market behind the left arm Maqam.

14. MAQAM HAZRAT ALI AKBAR A.S.: This is the spot where Ali Akbar was martyred.

15. MAQAM IMAM JAFFER SADIQ: Our 6th Imam used to come here. Perform his Ibadat and go to ziyarat of grandfather Imam Hussain a.s. He had an orchard here.

16. MAQAM IMAM ZAMANA A.J.T.F.S.: Imam Sahib Al Zaman comes here to recite Ziyarat of His grandfather Imam Hussain a.s. " where is the one who will avenge the blood of the Martyrs of Karbala".

17. ZIYARAAT OUTSIDE KARBALA- 3 HOUR TRIP: SHRINE OF HAZRAT AUN: He was the son of Bibi Zainab daughter of Imam Ali a.s. and son of Abdullah bin Jaffer Altayyar. He was martyred on the day of Ashura. He is buried 25 miles from the city of Karbala. It is narrated that in another rivaya that he was carrying the letter of Imam Hussain to the people of Mussayab and they killed him.

18. RAUZA OF MUHAMMAD & IBRAHIM IBN MUSLIM BIN AQEEL: They were the two sons of Muslim Bin Aqeel. They were going to Imam Hussain to give the message that their father had been killed. They were caught by Harith (may Allah send curse upon him). They were the first 2 young martyrs in the epic battle of Karbala.

19. HAZRAT HUR BIN YAZID ALRIYAH: He was the commander of one of Yazeed's battalion and was sent by yazeed to stop Imam Hussain a.s., his family and companions from going to Kufa unless and until Imam Hussain a.s. gives allegiance to Yazeed. When he arrived at the Imam's camp, he (Hurr) and his entire battalion including horses were dying out of thirst. Immediately Imam Hussain gave orders to Hazrat Abbas that they be given water until their thirst including horses are quenched, though they were the enemies of the Imam. On the night of Ashura Hur could not sleep after hearing the cries of small children from Imam Hussain's camp, crying for water. Early in the morning he asked his servant to tie his hands behind his back and he went straight to Imam 's camp. When he was near the camp, he came down his horse and walked to where the Imam was fell on his knees asking for forgiveness. Imam Hussain raised him up and told him that Allah SWT has forgiven you. He asked permission from the Imam to go and fight for

Islam which he did but after sometime he was martyred and he is buried about 10 miles from the city of Karbala. His grave is far because the tribe of Banu Asad could not see his body trampled by horses like other martyrs of Karbala as he was their chief. His grave was dug for a reason and they found fresh blood coming out of the handkerchief of Bibi Syeda Fatima Zahra S.A. which Imam Hussain a.s. tied on his head. They tried to remove it for blessing for themselves but fresh blood came out.

THE HOLY CITY OF KARBALA AL MOALLA:

The tragedy that took place at Karbala in 61 AH is so full of lessons and inspirations; it is powerful enough to move grown men to tears. The story of Ashura is a university that provides a comprehensive curriculum which, if followed, will guide a person to the truth. The morals and insights gained at this university empower a person to never desist from their responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil in society.

We notice that Imam Hussain a.s. did not come to Karbala alone, but with his family, his brothers, sisters, sons and nephews, amongst others- indicating that family is right at the core of Islam.

Furthermore, we are told that Imam Hussain a.s. stood up against the gross injustice of Yazeed. We pray that we fully benefit from the university that is the tragedy of Karbala and the plethora of lessons it has to offer.

Karbala is renowned as one of the holiest Cities of Islam. Every year millions of faithful from around the world make their pilgrimage to Karbala, they come as a symbol of their allegiance and homage to the principles embodied by Imam Hussain Bin Ali a.s., the grandson of our Prophet Mohammed (p.b.u.h.).

Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) was martyred in Karbala and his resting place, Mash'had Al-Hussain, is the heart of the Holy City. The Haram is crowned by a magnificent 25 metre high golden dome, which serves as a beacon for the devout.

Each and every year, the faithful mourn the greatest of sacrifice on Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram, re-enacting Imam Hussain's (pbuh), his families' and companions' final days and hours in the Holy City of Karbala.

Equally significant are the Haram of Hazrat Abbas a.s.; al Mukhayam, the dramatic site of Imam Hussain's a.s. camp; the mass grave of martyrs of Karbala at the foot of Imam Hussain's (p.b.u.h) tomb and the Maqam al Mehdi.

These wondrous sites have captivated the minds and hearts of believers for hundreds of years-still, generation after generation, they inspire millions to make the sacred journey to the city each year.

WHO IS IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S.) THAT MOTIVATES THESE PEOPLE?

This is the first of a series of questions which comes into minds of non-believers. Why would all these people walk for hundreds of miles just to remember an excruciatingly painful event that took place centuries ago?

MOTIVATIONS

Visitors to his shrine are not driven by emotions. They cry because they make a conscious decision to be reminded of the atrocious nature of the loss, and by doing so they reaffirm their pledge to everything that is virtuous and everyone that is holy. The first thing pilgrims do upon facing Imam Hussain's shrine is recite the Ziyarah which is a sacred text addressing Imam Hussain a.s. in the appropriate fashion that he is to be addressed.

Pilgrims come here not to admire the physical beauty, or to shop or to be entertained, or to visit ancient historical sites- but to cry and mourn. They come to join the angels in their grief. They all enter the sacred shrine crying, weeping and lamenting. It is as if every person has established a personal relationship with Imam Hussain a.s. They talk to him, call out his name and touch the walls and doors near his tomb, the way one touches the face of a long lost friend. It's a picturesque vista of epic proportions.

What motivates these people is something that requires an understanding of the character of Imam Hussain a.s. and the

relationship Iraqi's have developed with his living legacy. For 13 million Shia Muslims, however, a question this profound which can cause someone to relinquish for another can be answered only when once you have marched to his shrine.

For centuries, believers have flocked to the shrine of Imam Hussain a.s. in Karbala. Indeed this lofty Ziyarat (visitation) has been referred to in the 'ahadith' as the best of Deeds. This religious duty has been performed in times of peace as well as in times of unrest. Oppressive rulers have tried unsuccessfully to discourage the devout from visiting the Grave of the Imam a.s.

Modern history has proven that the desire of the faithful to visit Karbala, Najaf, Kadhmain and Samaraa(in addition to the shrines in other countries) has only increased overtime. One needs to look no further than the millions of zuwwar (visitors) who flock to the shrines each year (and in fact in Karbala –each Thursday night). Be it the day of Ashura, Arbaeen, Shabaniyah, Eid or Arafat, Karbala is the place to be! Commonly heard in Karbala is the motto: NEVER EVER YA ZAHRA, WILL WE FORGET (OUR) HUSSAIN.

“ Surely, there exists in the hearts of Mu'mineen, with respect to the martyrdom of Hussain a.s. a heat that never subsides.” Holy Prophet (Saww) mustadrak al wasail, vol.10, page 318.

EMBARKING ON AN ADVENTURE

Thousands upon thousands of men and children, but mostly black veiled women fill the eye from one end of the horizon to the other in crowds so massive, they cause a blockade for hundreds of miles.

Entire towns came to a virtual shut down as people converged on the holy city. The 620 km distance between the southern port city of Basra and Karbala is a long journey by any measure, and is unimaginably arduous on foot, it takes a full two weeks of walking. People of all age groups, even toddlers in their strollers are accompanied by their parents through the scorching heat of the sun in daytime and the bone chilling cold at night.

“ THOUSANDS OF MEN, CHILDREN AND WOMEN FILL THE EYE
ACROSS THE HORIZON”

They travel through rough terrain, uneven roads, terrorist strong holds and dangerous marshlands. Without any amenities or travel gear, the pilgrims carry nothing but a burning love for their “master” and flags and banners with exuberant quotes to remind the world and themselves to a certain extent about the purpose of their fervour.

O self, you are nothing
After the sacrifice of Hussain,
My life and death are one and the same,
So be it if you call me insane! Words of Abbas a.s.
Younger brother of Imam Hussain who was killed while trying to
fetch water for his thirst stricken siblings.

REMARKABLE SCENES

Most striking, however is the sight of old men and women in wheelchairs. Imagine walking for 620 km. Now imagine pushing a wheelchair for 620 km! I met a lady carrying her 1 yr daughter on her shoulders. I asked her why carry this young baby? She replied that I made a nazr if Allah grants me a child I will walk for 80 kms from Karbala to Najaf. She was very happy that after many years, her wish was fulfilled. Thousands of tents, make shift kitchens and medical clinics set up by local villagers who live around the pilgrims path. The tents called mawakeb (convoys) are the only places where the pilgrims can retire for the strenuous and physically exhausting journey. More startling, however is the sight of locals asking pilgrims to join them for food and drinks. They would intercept their path to invite them, plead with them and eventually beg them to take a short break on the side of the road to eat.

They would say: “ please honour us with your presence. Our masters, bless us by accepting our offerings. One tribal leader (who according to Iraqi traditions bows to no one and is treated like a king) was calling out through a loud speaker words that sent shivers down the spine: “ Welcome O’ pilgrims of Hussain. I’ll kiss the soles of your shoes. May I be sacrificed for you.

Please honour us with your presence.” After serving food and drinks to their guests, the host then proceed to wash their feet with his own hands and kisses their hands and forehead before bidding them farewell. They also offer the pilgrim of any thing they desire so that it can be served.

We pray that Allah accepts your ziyaraat and if you haven't been, we pray you are given the tawfeeq by Allah to visit the various places of ziyarah. Also you may develop a closer and more intimate relationship with the Master of our Age, Imam Al-Hujjah (A.f.S), may our souls be his ransom.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ARBA'EEN

Why is so much importance is given to the performance of the Ziyarat of Arba'een and the observance of Arba'een (40 days of mourning of Karbala martyrs?

Imam Muhammad Al Baqir a.s. states that the heavens wept over Imam Hussain a.s. for forty mornings, rising red and setting red. As we complete 40 days of remembrance of our Imam, we re-assert our pledge of obedience and loyalty to him. Our Prophet has said:” The earth mourns the death of a believer for forty mornings”. Therefore, it appears that the deceased should be remembered and mourned over for a period of 40 days. Performing an act for a continuous period of forty days is also known to help one to not just form a habit, but also to carry on the practice for the rest of his life.

Reciting particular duas for a period of forty days is highly recommended in our practices as well. The unit 40 is said to be very effective. If a particular dua is recited 40 times or 40 people gather to recite it, or it is recited for 40 days then its effectiveness is highly increased.

It is reported from Imam Jaffer al sadiq a.s. that whoever recites “Dua e Ahad” for 40 days, after morning prayers will be amongst the helpers of the 12th Imam. Visitation of the shrine of Imam Hussain a.s. on Thursdays and Masjid e Sahla and Masjid Jamkaran for 40 consecutive Tuesdays is also very highly

recommended and is one of the acts that promises a visit from the 12th Imam (a.t.f.s.).

Thus, as we perform the ziyarat of of Arba'een and commemorate the Arba'een, 40 days of mourning of Imam Hussain a.s. we hope and pray that these forty days of remembrance of Imam Hussain a.s. brings about a transformation in us by which we can continue to follow the path of Imam Hussain a.s. and carry on his message of upholding justice with true and a strong sense of selfless service!

ZIYARAAT OF MADA'EN

1. RAUZA-SHRINE OF SALMAN AL FARSI- SALMAN AL MOHAMMADI : His real name was Rozeba. He was born into a Zoroastrian family who worshipped fire in town called Jiyye in Iran. He left Iran in search of truth and the prophet who was going to come (as he had learned in Christianity). When he heard of the Prophet's arrival in Quba, Salman went to meet him. Salman had read the signs of a prophet. A. does not accept sadaqa. B. does not return gifts. C. mark between shoulders. Salman noticed all above signs. Salman accepted Islam and the Prophet's prophethood. One day the prophet visited Salman who was very ill. He prayed for him that Allah keep him far from all ills (body and soul) till death. Therefore, the name from there-salman (safety). In Madina when the prophet arranged brotherhood, Salman was made brother of Abu dhar AlGhifari. Salman learned as much as he could from the prophet, at times of spending whole nights with him. It was Salman who advised the digging of ditch around Madina in the battles of Khandaq. When the ditch was being dug both Ansars and Muhajreen claimed that Salman was one of them but the prophet said: Salman is neither from Ansar or from Muhajir but is one of us- the people of the house(Ahlulbayt). With Imam Ali's permission Salman accepted the governorship of Mada'en. Nearing his death he asked Asbagh bin Nubata (another companion) to take him to the cemetery of Mada'en where he talked to a corpse about death. He told Asbagh that he was to die soon and recited Kalima. Imam Ali a.s came from Madina to

Mada'en to give Ghusl and Kafan to Salman and he was buried by Imam in Mada'en.

2. HUZAIFA AL YAMANI A.R.: He was one of those seven persons who participated in the funeral prayers of syeda Fatima Zahra s.a. He was known as the possessor of secrets, as Prophet had told him of those who were plotting to kill him after the battle of Tabuk. Huzayfa was appointed governor of Mada'en. He died just before the battle of Jamal in 36 AH and was buried in Mada'en.
3. JABIR BIN ABDULLAH ANSARI A.R.: Jabir was born six years before the announcement of prophethood to Abdullah bin amr who lived in the area between what is now Masjid-e-Qiblatain and the town of Madina. When they heard the Prophet's message of Islam, Jabir was a young man of 16-17 years. They had already heard of the coming of a prophet from the Jews whose influence was strong in Madina. Jabir, his father and the other family members accepted Islam without seeing the prophet (SAWW). Most of the tribes in MMadina had accepted Islam and once they sat to discuss their views. They concluded that they longed for the Prophet (SAWW) to be with them and since the Prophet was suffering persecution in Mecca, they would invite him to come and live in Madina. Jabir was one of those chosen to represent his tribe despite his young age. Once the prophet arrived in Madina Jabir spent most of his time with him, although he lived far from Madina. In the battle of Badr, Jabir longed to go and fight with others but his father refused permission saying that if both of them went, then there would be no one to look after Jabir's nine sisters. Jabir went to the Prophet who said if Jabir's father had refused he could not go. Jabir was very sad. He went to Badr to give water to mujahids (soldiers) but could not participate in the fighting. His father however fought with the 313 of Badr and came back. During the battle of Uhud again Jabir was refused permission. Abdullah Ansari was killed and his body was mutilated like Hamza. He used to live away from Madina and wanted to move near te prophet. Once he heard the prophet saying that one who travels to a masjid Allah grants him 70,000 thawab at every step of his journey and the forgiveness of sins. Jabir remained far and travelled all the way to the Masjid everyday to gain more thawab. Even later onin life when he lost his

eye sight he continued to travel to the masjid everyday. Hadith e kisa was narrated by syeda Fatima Zahra a.s. to Jabir. The Prophet told Jabir that he would live long to see Imam Mohammed Baqir and that he would convey the prophet's SAWW to him. He was blind in his old age but used to go around the streets of Madina saying: "Ayna Mohammad?" Where is Mohammed looking for the 5th Imam. Jabir was the first Zaer pilgrim to the graves of the shuhada of Karbala. He did ghusl in the waters of the river Furat, took off his shoes and approached the Graves of Imam Hussain a.s. He wept wishing he had been there on the day of "Ashura" to assist Imam Hussain a.s. He died in his late nineties. And is buried in Mada'en. In the year 1934, Nuripasa the vazir (vice President) of shah Faisal the King of Iraq at that time, saw a dream for three consecutive days whereby Jabir told him that water was coming into his grave and that of Huzayfa's. He asked him to transfer them to another grave. Nuripasa narrated that the dream to Shah Faisal who said that he also had the same dream. It was decided to transfer the bodies to another grave, which was announced. On 26th march 1934 and it was announced in the PTI News agency world wide. Some German reporters who came to witness the transfer of the bodies. When the bodies were taken out of the graves they were intact with the same Kafan. Even the eyes were wide open with so much "noor" and the hair of the beard was still wet as if the bodies had just been given Ghusl. Salaat e mayyit was prayed again. The army saluted and the bodies were transferred to another grave site next to Hazrat Salman Mohammadi. Many German's witnessing this accepted Islam.

4. HISTORIC SITE TAQ KISRA: This used to be the summer palace of King of Persia whose name was Naushervaan. Because it can get very cold in Iran during winter, he built this some 1700 years ago and used to come and stay there during the severe winter months. It is narrated that when the Prophet of Allah SAWW was born, the famous arch in it which is known as the Arch of Catesiphon, developed cracks in it. Visitors can still see the arch and the cracks in it.
5. Grave of Mohammed tahir s/o Imam Zainul Abedeen.

THE FIRST MARTYR OF KARBALA

HAZRAT MUSLIM BIN AQEEL: was the first cousin of Hazrat Imam Hussain (as). He was the son of Aqeel Ibn Abu Talib (as)-the brother of Imam Ali (as). Hazrat Muslim (as) was trusted and loved by Hazrat Imam Hussain (as). He was sincere in actions and commanded respect due to his loyalty and reputation for being steadfast in following the laws of Islam, even when faced with adversity. Hazrat Muslim was chosen to represent Hazrat Imam Hussain (as) in a mission to travel to Kufa. The political situation was tense and Hazrat Imam Hussain (as) received numerous letters signed by the Kufan chiefs and leaders declaring their rejection of Yazid's (La) claim to the caliphate. The letters urged the Imam (as) to come to Kufa quickly and lead instead of Yazid. Hazrat Muslim was told to assess the situation. As Hazrat Muslim (as) prepared for the journey, Hazrat Imam Hussain suggested that when they see you with such young children, they will know that our intentions are peaceful. Hazrat Muslim faithfully accepted his duty and travelled with his two young sons. On arrival, the apparent sincerity of the Kufans continued with many thousands confirming renewed allegiance to Hazrat Imam Hussain (as). This was in fact little more than lip service. Yazid knew well the weakness of the Kufans and he dispatched one of his most wicked henchmen Ubaydallah bin Ziyad, renowned for his ruthless bloodshedding, with an order to send back the head of Hazrat Muslim (as). Ubaydallah threatened the Kufans with a violent death if they supported any other than the ruling government. Alas, Hazrat Muslim (as) was not to know that the same Kufan's who had written emotional begging letters of help to Hazrat Imam Hussain (as) would soon leave him helpless and facilitate his murder. It was a lonely time for Hazrat Muslim (as) who was without friend or supporter in a city of so-called 'Muslims'. When Hazrat Muslim (as) was caught by Ibn Ziyad's army by trick, he was taken to the roof of a palace to be executed and his body was thrown to the ground. Later his two innocent captive children were also violently killed.

Today the above palace where he was thrown from, remains in ruins outside Masjid Kufa, whereas Hazrat Muslim's shrine is still there in Masjid Kufa and hundreds of zawar visit him daily. Today there is no sign of Ibn ziyad or Yazeed's grave.

SAMARAA

The name 'Samaraa' is derived from the Arabic phrase "surra man raa", which translates to "a joy for all who sees".

The khalifa Mutawakkil (La) made it his military base to stay in control of the large Turkish army and commissioned the largest mosque in the world to be built – Masjid Jamia.

His hatred for Ahlul Bayt was so intense that he ordered the grave of Imam Hussain (as) to be levelled to the ground. In 234 AH, Mutawakkil ordered Imam Ali Naqi a.s. to be brought from Madina to Samaraa where he was placed in a house next to Khalifa's garrison. The Imam lived under constant surveillance until Mutawakkil was murdered by his own troops at the instigation of his own son, Mustansir. Mustansir bin Mutawakkil reversed the policies of his father towards the Ahlul Bayt (as), returning the property of Fadak to them. He was killed after 6 months and Mustaeen came to power and continued the oppressive policies of his ancestors. But soon his Turkish troops rebelled against him and pledged allegiance to Mu'tazz bin Mutawakkil whom they rescued from prison. He poisoned Imam Ali Naqi a.s. in 254 AH.

10th Imam completed the rules of Taqleed to prepare believers for the occultation of 12th Imam.

AL ASKARI MASJID

Also known as the golden mosque which was renovated as the dome and minarets were destroyed by the enemies of Ahlul Bayt who don't leave them in peace in their life and even after their death. Buried here are:

IMAM ALI NAQI a.s. (10th Imam of Muslim Shia)

IMAM HASSAN ASKARI a.s. (11th Imam of Muslim Shia)

Sayyida Hakima Khatoon (sa). Sister of Imam Ali Naqi and daughter of 9th Imam Taqi Aljawad.

Narjis Khatoon (sa) – The mother of Imam Zaman (12th Imam) AJTFS.

Imam Hassan Askari was kept under house arrest for a very long time. He was kept there because the ruler of the time did not want him to have a son, just like at the time of Hazrat Musa a.s. He was married to Bibi Narjis Khatoon (sa) who gave birth to our 12th Imam. He became an Imam at the age of about four and half years when his father Imam Hassan Askari passed away. He led Salat Mayyit on his father.

SAYYIDA HAKIMA KHATOON

She taught Bibi Narjis Khatoon (sa) about the rules of religion. She was present when the 12th Imam was born. When 11th Imam was in prison Bibi Hakima Khatoon s.a. used to answer all the masael, which the shia ummah used to ask her. She was a very learned and pious lady.

BIBI NARJIS KHATOON

She was a Princess from Roman Empire, who became a Muslim after seeing Bibi Fatima Zahra s.a. and the Holy Prophet (SAWW) in her dream. She was the mother of our 12th Imam Imam Mehdi A.S.

Our 11th Imam told Bibi Narjis (sa) that the army will enter our home to check whether any child is born to which Bibi Narjis Khatoon told Imam: " please pray for me that I die before they enter our home and make me captive". She died before 11th Imam's shahadat.

12th IMAM – IMAM MEHDI A.S.- STILL ALIVE IN GHAYBAT

Our Imam has many titles like: Sahibul Asr (Lord of the period of time), Saheb al zaman(Lord of the age- Mehdi-Guide).

He has the same name as our Holy Prophet that is MOHAMMED. He was born in Samaraa and was under his

father's care until his father was martyred. He became the Imam at the age of four and half years and went into OCCULTATION.

He was only available to his deputies who were Uthman Bin Saeed, Mohammed Bin Uthman, Hussain Bin rooh, Ali bin Mohammed Samari. When the last of them was to die, Imam wrote to tell him that there would be no more deputies after him and that he (Imam) was going into Occultation until Allah SWT willed him to re-appear.

MAQAM E GHAYBAT OF OUR 12TH IMAM A.S.

This is the basement of the house of the 11th Imam A.s. which is close to the shrine of Imam Ali Naqi a.s. where the shrine now stands. The entrance has been opened from the courtyard. It is said that this was the house of Bibi Narjis and our 12th Imam was last seen here. Occultation (Ghaybat) of Imam Mehdi commenced from here. It is narrated that Imam Mehdi is fond of this place, thus it is considered an important place. Recite Ziyarat e Nahhiya here which takes about 35-40 minutes.

IBRAHIM IBN MALIK-E-ASHTAR A.R.

BALAD TOWN

SYED MOHAMMED IBN IMAM ALI NAQI A.S.

It is a small town from Samaraa. Syed Mohammed is burried here. He is called Abu Jaffer and was the eldest son of Imam ali Naqi (as). Many come to his grave to use his wasila for resolving disputes and asking for being blessed with children, or marriage of daughters etc. During the time of Hajjaj bin Yusuf thousands of shias were imprisoned here and when they died buried here as it was cemetery.

When your Hajjat are fulfilled try to sacrifice a lamb here. There is recommendation in Quran as well an order by allah to his Prophet: " Wassale Le Rabbeka wanhar". Means pray

and give sacrifice. Many difficulties can be anished by sacrifice of a lamb in third world.

KADHMMAIN/ ALKADHEMIYA

It is a city which is one of the oldest towns in Iraq. It is situated next to al karkh near Baghdad. Formerly it was known as The Quraish Cemetry. After Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) was buried here the town was named by his name. Also there is the grave of Mohammed Taqi (A.s.) 9th Imam Aljawad. It is connected with al Rasafa bridge on the Tigris River. Built in 1515. It is a twin city of Baghdad and just a bridge between them seperates these two cities.

RAUZA OF IMAM MUSA KAZIM A.S.

Zawar usually enter through the gate which is known as 'Bab al murad' which means the gate of fulfilment of wishes.

He is our 7th Imam and he was given the title of 'Kadhim' that means one who swallows his anger. He also has another title 'Bab ul Hawaej' , which literally means the door of fulfilment of wishes.

Harun Al Rasheed had imprisoned our Imam and then poisoned him and left his body on the bridge of Baghdad for three days, then his followers buried him.

RAUZA OF IMAM MOHAMMED TAQI-ALJAWAD

He is the 9th Imam and became Imam at the age of 9 years. Even at the young age he displayed excellence in knowledge. The great elaborate mosque, constructed in A.D. 1515, has two domes and four minarets all coated with gold.

TOMB OF SHEIKH MUFEED A.R.

Mufeed title means who brings benefit. His real name is Mohammed Bin Nu'man. Even our 12th Imam a.s. addressed him in the name of 'Mufeed'. It is said that he was the author of hundreds of books and one of the most important one being 'Kitabul Irshad' which is the life history of our 12 Imams.

His tomb is within the boundary of the Rauza of our 7th Imam and 9th Imam in Kadhmain. He used to sleep very little spending his nights in worship, study and writing. He was one of the privileged people to whom the 12th Imam has written on three occasions and the contents of the letter recorded. Among his students were Syed Radhi and syed Murtadha. Syed Murtadha led his salat e mayyit and 70,000 people attended his funeral. On his grave Imam Mehdi a.s. wrote verses expressing the grief of Aal e Rasul at his departure from the world.

KHAWAJA NASIRRUDIN TUSI A.R.

His name was Mohammed Bin Hassan al Tussi. He excelled in his knowledge both in religious and other fields like astronomy, medicine, mathematics, geography and history.

His students included Allama Hilli. He was the Mujtahid (rejuvenator) of Islam of the 6th century.

He converted the Mongol ruler Halaku Khan to Islam. The conversion was not easy task, for the Mongols were destroyers who in their invasions had destroyed everything in their path. When Khawaja Tusi told him of Allah, he asked to see the book of Allah. He was impressed and converted to Islam. Khawaja Nasiruddin asked to be buried at the entrance of the Haram in Kadhmain and to inscribe the following Ayat of quran on his grave: "And their day lay stretching his paws at the entrance..."18:18.

He died at the age of 75. 12th Imam taught him 'dua e tawassul' in his dream.

SYED MURTADHA: ALI BIN HUSSAIN BIN IBRAHIM BIN MUSA ALKADHIM A.S

He was born in Baghdad in the year 355 AH. He had a younger brother called Syed Radhi a.r. who compiled the sermons and letters of Imam ali a.s. in what is known as 'Nahjul Balagha'.

He was given 'Alamul Huda' (banner of guidance) by Imam Ali a.s. to minister of Abbasid Khalifa in his dream. He is known to have written, compiled, read or having been associated with 80,000 books. His son led his salat ul mayyit and he is buried in Kadhmain outside Haram of 7th Imam a.s.

SYED RADHI:

His father was a descendent of Imam Musa al Kadhim and his mother the descendents of Imam Zainul Abedeen a.s. She was a woman famous for her piety and literary talents.

Amongst his works the compilation of Nahjul Balagha-the peak of elequence. It is reported that for years, Syed Radhi worked 18 hours a day. He died in the year 404 AH at the age of 45 years.

BAGHDAD- THE CAPITOL OF IRAQ

Wherever you join Baghdad you will see domes and minarets ornamented in blue or glazed tiles, or covered with gold leaf. Many of them belong to shrines and mosques that have their stories to tell about holy men who once rendered humanity great services with their teaching and their wisdom and piety. Their tombs, enshrined under these domes and minarets, have become places of worship and study and are visited by thousands of people every month. Here are some of them:

1. MASJID BURATHA: It is narrated that this was a church before time of Imam Ali a.s. when 1st Imam returned from Nahervan Battle, The Christian priest visited our Imam to rest here, which he did for 3 days. During his stay he saw the people of the church go out very far to fetch water and Imam asked why he does not dig a well in church compound? The priest replied that they tried but got salt water. Imam hit the ground with his heel and in some other narrations he removed the cover which was there from years on a spring of water, appeared with cool sweet water. There is a black stone at this miracle place. Also there is a white stone with ayatul kursi written on it.
2. GRAVE OF ABU JAFFER MOHAMMED IBN YAQUB AL KULAYNI A.R.: The compiler of Al-Kafi & writer of many books. Died in Baghdad in approx.. 328/329 AH and is buried here. He was a famous narrator of ahadiths of the prophet of Allah and the Imams.
3. MAZAR OF HAZRAT QAMBAR A.R.: During the time of Imam ali A.s. he was his slave. Imam Ali a.s. bought him and freed him. Hazrat Qambar told Imam Ali a.s. that I will agree to be freed only if you promise me that as long as I live, I will be living at your house and helping you and your family.

4. START OF THE GHAIBAT –E-KUBRA (GREATER OCCULTATION)- OF IMAM-E-ZAMANA (A.S.): According to other reports, the date was 4th or 9th of shawwal 329 A.H. The Imam's ghaibat (occultation) was in two phase- Ghaibat-e-sughra (minor occultation) was for about 69 years-260 A.H. (872 A.D.) to 329 A.H. (939 A.D.) and the Ghaibat-e-kubra (greater occultation) started in 329 A.H. and will continue until Allah SWT wills. During Ghaibat-e-sughra, the 12th Imam a.s. appointed four deputy.

- a. Uthman bin Saeed (A.R.): He was the first chief deputy of our 12th Imam who used to be in close contact with him. It is said that at the age of 11 ears he was a servant in the house of 9th Imam. He occupied the same trust with the 10th Imam and 11th Imam who told their shias that after him they would not see the 12th Imam and would have to obey Uthman. After the 11th Imam's martyrdom Uthman moved to Baghdad. He served Imam for 18 months and received a letter near his death from Imam telling him to appoint his son Mohammed as the next representative.
- b. Muhammad bin Uthman: He continued in his father's footsteps also acting as a better seller. As instructed by Imam he appointed Hussain bin Rawh as the next representative after his death in 305 A.H.
- c. Hussain bin Rawh: He was the third deputy of our 12th Imam (a.s.). His kunniya was Abul Qasim. He managed to keep his activities a secret from the rulers whilst maintaining good relations with them. It is to him that we address the 'ariza' to be delivered to Imam. He served faithfully until he died in Sha'baan 326 A.H. revealing the appointment of ali bin mohammed Samary after him.
- d. Ali bin Mohammed Samary A.R.: He was the fourth and last deputy of 12th Imam A.S. He served for only three years. A week for before his death he received a letter from the Imam a.s. telling him of his forthcoming death and that there would be no representative after him and that Imam a.s. was now going into Ghaibat –e-kubra (major occultation). Imam a.s. would then appear when allah SWT wills it. Ali bin Muhammad Sumary r.a. died on 15th Shabaan 329 A.H. In Imam's letter it was mentioned: ' My appearance will take place after a very long time, when the world wilbe full of injustice and violence'. Kamaaluddin vol 2 page 5/6 Ghaibat-e-tusi page 395.

Imam's ghaibat is described by the aimma like that of Prophet Yusuf A.s. who was amongst his brothers yet they did not recognise him. Imam is known to meet a believer on 3 occasions:

1. At the time of trouble.

2. He is present at every Hajj
3. He attends the funeral of every believer who has no religious obligations pending on him/her e.g. Khums.

During this time he continues to guide. Numerous letters have been received from him by (to quote a few) Ishaq bin Yaqub, sheikh Mufeed.

FAVOURS OF IMAM MEHDI A.S.

“ Surely, we do not neglect your condition nor are we forgetful of your remembrance. Had it not been so, then terrible calamities would have struck you and your enemies would have destroyed you.” Al Ihtejaj vol 2 page 258

Imam Mehdi a.s. says:

“ And pray more for an early re-appearance. For certainly, in it, is your success.” Kamaaluddin vol. 2 pg 485, Ghaibat-e-tusi pg 292-293.

GRAVE OF YUSHA BIN NOON R.A.

MAY ALLAH AND IMAM ACCEPT YOUR EFFORTS AND ZIYARAAT.

PL REMEMBER THS SERVANT OF IMAM HUSSAIN-MOHAMED RAZA JAFFER

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