

Going for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A)

Learning Objectives

- Why do we go for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A)?
- What do we do when on ziyārah?
- Memorise verses 4:100 & 3:169

Going for *ziyārah* refers to visiting the burial place of the Holy Prophet (S) and his blessed family and progeny (A), be it in modern day Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Syria or elsewhere. The *Ma'sūmīn* (A) have placed great emphasis in the importance of going for *ziyārah* and the reward one gains as a result.

Why do we go for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A)?

1) Through going for *ziyārah*, we aim to pay our respects to these special servants of Allāh (SWT) and renew our pledges with them of being their sincere followers. We reflect upon their lives, their teachings and their sacrifices for the sake of Allāh (SWT) and try to implement these in our own lives back at home.

2) Going to *ziyārah* provides us with a much needed time out from our busy lives in order to build ourselves spirituality in the proximity of the holy personalities, such that we can return home spiritually charged and more able to face the many tests that await us.

As is described in the following verse, by undertaking this journey, we are fleeing to Allāh (SWT) and His Messenger (S):

وَمَنْ يُخْرِجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

and whoever goes forth from his house fleeing to Allah and His Apostle, and then death overtakes him, his reward is indeed with Allah and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. [4:100]

3) The shrines of these holy personalities are very special places. In our *aḥādīth*, we are told that thousands of angels are continuously descending to these places and then ascending back to heaven. When we ask for our prayers from these holy places, they are accepted much faster.

In the Qur'ān, we also learn the effects of praying from these special places. Prophet Zakariyyah (A) really wanted a child, but he had reached an old age and his wife was not able to have children. When he saw the special favours that Allāh (SWT) gave *Sayyidah* Maryam (A) at her prayer place, he used this special location in order to make his own prayers for a child. His prayers were immediately answered:

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ۗ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ
عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا ۗ قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا ۗ قَالَتْ
هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

Her Lord graciously accepted her and made her grown in goodness, and entrusted her to the charge of Zakariyyah. Whenever Zakariyyah went in to see her in her sanctuary, he found her supplied with provisions. He said, "Mary, how is it you have these provisions? and she said, "They are from God: God provides limitlessly for whoever He will."

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۗ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ
الدُّعَاءِ

There Zakariyyah prayer to his Lord, saying, "Lord, from Your grace grant me virtuous offspring: You hear every prayer."

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

The angels called out to him, while stood praying in the sanctuary, "God gives you news of Yahya, confirming a Word from God. He will be noble and chaste, a prophet, one of the righteous." [3:37-9]

4) Just because these holy personalities are not physically alive anymore, doesn't mean they can't hear us and know our situation. The Qur'an is very clear that who die in the way of Allāh (SWT) are alive and sustained by Him:

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

Think not of those slain in the way of Allah as dead. Indeed they are living, (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord [3:169]

When we go for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), we are required to seek permission to enter their shrines by reciting the *idhn al-dukhūl* (permission to enter). One of the things we say in this is the following:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْتَقِدُ حُرْمَةَ صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْمَشْهَدِ الشَّرِيفِ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ كَمَا أَعْتَقِدُهَا فِي
حَضْرَتِهِ ، وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ رَسُولَكَ وَخُلَفَاءَكَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ أَحْيَاءٌ ، عِنْدَكَ يُرْزَقُونَ ، يَرَوْنَ
مَقَامِي ، وَيَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامِي ، وَيَرُدُّونَ سَلَامِي ، وَأَنَّكَ حَجَبْتَ عَنِّي سَمْعِي كَلَامَهُمْ ،
وَفَتَحْتَ بَابَ فَهْمِي بِلَذِيذِ مُنَاجَاتِهِمْ

O Allāh, I hold (as an article of faith) this honoured place of pilgrimage as sacred, in his invisibility just as I was certain and sure of his sanctity in his presence. I know that Your messenger and Your representatives (peace be upon them) are alive, receiving sustenance from You. They see my place of spiritual state, hear my words and answer my Salaam. Although You have shut off their speech from my hearing, but you have unlocked the door of my understanding because of my delightful recitation of their merits.

Class activity

In pairs, discuss your experiences from your last journey for *ziyārah*. If you have not been, discuss why you would like to go.

Did you know?

On the day of ‘Arafah, the angels descend to the Shrine of Imam al-Ḥusayn (AS) and listens to the prayers of the *zuwwār* before they go to the plains of ‘Arafah to hear the prayers of the *ḥujjāj*.

Key Points

- 1) Through going for *ziyārah*, we pay our respects and renew our allegiance to the *Ma‘sumīn* (A). We reflect on their lives and try to implement their teachings in our life. We get to work on ourselves spiritually while we are away from our busy lives.
- 2) These special places are where our prayers are accepted much faster due to their physical proximity.
- 3) The holy personalities are spiritually alive and can hear us. This is why we ask permission to enter and send them our *Salām*.

Summary Questions

- 1) What should we pray for when we go to *ziyārah*?
- 2) Why is it important to go for *ziyārah*?
- 3) Why would our prayers be accepted much faster during *ziyārah*?

Guess the place and the name of all the holy personalities that are buried in each of the images below. There may be more than one personality associated with each imagine.

HINT: There are a total of 16 personalities to be guessed! (See below)





