

Merits of Ziyārat Places in Iran

Imam Ali b. Mūsā al-Ridhā (a)

Thawāb (Divine pleasure) of Visiting Imam al-Ridhā (a)

There are many traditions concerning the merits of ziyārat of Imam Ridhā (a). In some the divine reward (thawāb) is equal to the martyrs of Badr and in other traditions its thawāb is equal to that of a hajj. We narrate below a few of these traditions, praying to the Almighty Allah, ‘azz wa-jall, to grant regular opportunities to Mu’minīn to visit al-Ridha (a) with a ziyārat that is accepted.

1. Ja‘far ibn Muhammad ibn Qawlawayh narrates a tradition from Hasan ibn Abdullah, from his father, ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Isa, from Dāwūd Sarmi, who narrates from Abu Ja‘far the Second (i.e. Imam Muhammad al-Taqī (a), the ninth Holy Imam) saying: *Whoever visits my father’s tomb shall enter paradise* (*Kāmil al-Ziyārat*, p. 303).
2. Again, he narrates from his father, from Sa‘ad, from Ibrahim ibn Rayyan, from Yahya ibn al-Hasan al-Husayni, from Ali ibn Abdullah ibn Qutrub: “Once when the sons of Imam Musa Kazim (a) were gathered in his presence, Ali, his son, who was very young, passed by. The Holy Imam said: *This son of mine shall die in a foreign land. So whoever makes a pilgrimage to his shrine, while he submits to his Wilayah and Imamate and knows his right, shall have a reward near Allah Almighty and Glorious, like that of the martyrs of Badr* (*Ibid*, p. 304).
3. The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said: *A part of me will be buried in Khurāsān. Any faithful believer who visits him, Allah will make Paradise obligatory on him/her and will prohibit the Hell to consume his body.* In another authentic Hadith, the Holy Prophet (s) said: *A part of me will be buried in Khurāsān. Any distressed person visiting him, will have his distress relieved by Almighty Allah. And if a sinful person visits him, his sins forgiven by Almighty Allah.*
4. Imam al-Ridhā (a) is reported to have said: *In Khurāsān, there is an area, which will soon be frequently visited by the angels; a group is descending and another is ascending until the Trumpet will be blown (to declare the coming of the Resurrection Day).* “O, Son of Allah’s Messenger,” the Imam (a) was asked, “What is this area?” He answered: *It is in the land of Tūs. By Allah (I swear), it is one of the gardens of Paradise. Whoever visits me therein, will be as if he has visited the Messenger of Allah (s).* For that visit too, Almighty Allah will record the reward of one thousand acceptable Hajj and one thousand acceptable ‘umrah; and my forefathers and I will be his intercessors on the Resurrection Day.

5. Imam al-Ridhā (a) is reported to have said: *If one visits me despite farness of my place, I will come to him on three occasions of the Resurrection Day so as to save him from the horrors of these occasions:*

- (1) *When the records of deeds are presented [on the] right and left [hands],*
- (2) *When sirāt (the Bridge) is crossed, and*
- (3) *When the scale of deeds is set up.*"

6. According to another valid tradition, Imam al-Ridhā (a) is reported to have said: *I will be killed wrongfully by poison and I will be entombed beside Hārūn the ‘Abbasid ruler.*

Almighty Allah shall then make the soil of my tomb frequently visited by my adherents (i.e. Shi‘ah). Hence, whoever visits me in my strange land, it will be incumbent on me to pay him a visit on the Resurrection Day. I swear by Him Who honored Muhammad with apostleship and chose him over all the creatures, any one of you who offers a two-unit prayer near my tomb shall be worthy of receiving forgiveness of Almighty Allah on the day when he will meet Him. I swear by Him Who honored us after Muhammad with Imamate and gave us succession (of Prophethood) in particular, the visitors of my tomb shall be the most honored delegations of Almighty Allah on the Resurrection Day. Any faithful believer whose face is touched by a drop of the sky (on his way to visit us), Almighty Allah shall forbid Hellfire to consume his body.

7. Shaykh al-Sadūq, in his book of *Uyūn Akhbar al-Ridha*, has reported the following: A righteous man saw the Holy Prophet (s) in his dream, “O Allah’s Messenger,” the man asked, “Which of your offspring should I go to visit?” The Holy Prophet (s) answered, “Some of them have come to me poisoned. Others have come slain.”

“Then,” the man asked, “Given the great distances between their shrines, which one of them do you recommend me to go and visit?”

The Holy Prophet (s) said: *You may visit the one closest to you, who is buried in the land of loneliness.*

“O Allah’s Messenger,” the man asked, “Do you mean al-Ridhā?”

The Holy Prophet (s) instructed: *You should have added (after mentioning his name): Allah’s blessings be upon him! Allah’s blessings be upon him! Allah’s blessings be upon him! (Three times).*

8. In the books of *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* and *al-Mustadrak al-Wasa'il al-Shi'ah*, there are dedicated chapters on the recommendations of seeking blessings from the shrine of Imam al-Ridhā (a) as well as the shrines of the other Holy Imams (a), the recommendation of preceding pilgrimage to Imam al-Ridhā (a) to pilgrimage to Imam al-Husayn (a) as well as all the other Holy Imams (a) and preceding it even to the supererogatory Hajj and ‘umrah.

9. Muhammad ibn Sulaymān asked Imam Muhammad al-Taqī (a) about a man who went to perform his obligatory Hajj and then went to perform ‘umrah, and Almighty Allah granted him success to perform both Hajj and ‘umrah together. Then he went

to al-Madinah and greeted the Holy Prophet (s). He then went to visit your forefather the Commander of the Faithful (a), recognizing that he is rightfully the Hujjat (argument) of Allah over His creatures and His door from which the Almighty must be approached. So, he greeted him. Then he went to visit Imam al-Husayn (a) and greeted him. Then he went to Baghdad and greeted Imam Mūsā al-Kāzim (a). Then he went back to his hometown. If once again Almighty Allah grants him opportunity to go on hajj; to whom will it be better for him to go under these conditions? Should he, who has already performed Hajj, go on pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'bah, or should he turn towards Khurāsān to greet and visit the shrine of your father Alī ibn Mūsā al-Ridhā?”

The Imam (a) replied: *It is better for him to go towards Khurāsān to greet my father. This visit will be even much better if it is done in the month of Rajab. However, it is not appropriate to do this now, because the ruling authorities have a bad idea about us.*

10. Shaykh al-Sadūq, in his book of *Man-lā-yahdhuruhul-faqih*, has reported Imam Muhammad al-Taqī (a) as saying: *Between the two mountains of Tūs, there is an area brought from Paradise. Hence, whoever enters that area will be secured against Hellfire on the Resurrection Day.*

11. Imam Muhammad al-Taqī (a) is also reported to have said: *I will guarantee Paradise on behalf of Almighty Allah for those who visit my father in Tūs.*

12. Ali b. Mahziyār narrates that: I asked Abu Ja‘far (Muhammad b. Ali, al-Taqī al-Jawad – the 9th Imam): May I be your ransom; does the ziyārat of al-Ridhā (a) is more excellent (*afḍal*) or the ziyārat of Abu ‘Abdillāh al-Husayn (a)? He (a) said: *His ziyārat has more excellence, and that is because very many people visit Abu ‘Abdillah (a), but none visit my father except the distinguished amongst the Shī‘ah* (Quoted in major books of Hadiths such as al-Kafi 4:584, al-Faqīh 2:384, al-‘Uyūn 2:261, al-Kāmil p. 510, al-Tahdhīb 6:84, al-Bihār 102:39, al-Wasā’il 14:563).

What should be the Objective of the Ziyārat?

Ziyārat (pilgrimage) is a desire to visit and present yourself before one whom you love, respect and venerate. It begins by leaving our native place (*watan*) and visiting shrines of Holy Imams (a). Although it involves physical traveling in reality it should be a movement of the heart and spirit.

Ziyārat is the means of connecting our hearts to the divine proof (*bijjat of Allah*) and presenting ourselves at the disposal of the Imam and benefitting from the spiritual bounties surrounding the Holy shrine. Personalities buried in these shrines are the immaculate leaders who devoted their lives struggling in the cause of Allah, ‘az̤z wa-jall, and defending the rights of the people and propagating the true Islam and pure

monotheism. In the case of Mashhad, one automatically remembers the martyrdom of Imam al-Ridhā (a), because the word ‘Mashhad’ in Arabic means ‘the place of martyrdom.’ Know that during such visitations helps us derive the gnosis of the Ma’sūmīn and understanding the spiritual stations

Etiquette of Ziyārat

- 1 – Perform ghusl when leaving your residence in your home town. Renew your ghusl when you reach your residence/hotel in Mashhad and head to the shrine. If after the ghusl something happens that breaks your wudhu, then perform wudhu before entering the holy court yard of the Shrine.
- 2 - Wear clean, tidy and new clothes on which perfume has been applied.
- 3 - When going towards the holy shrine, the pilgrim should walk with dignity. Ensure that you maintain humility by keeping the head down, keeping the presence of heart and mind – exactly in the same way as if you were visiting the Holy Imam (a) in his life-time. Ensure you are not distracted by fellow pilgrims or by the greatness of the court yard, beauty of the dome, etc.
- 4 – Seek permission by reciting the supplication of *idhn al-dukbūl* before entering the shrine. Either read the translation along with it, or make efforts to comprehend what you are reading; you will be filled with awe and reverence.
- 5 - In the holy shrine, the pilgrim should be busy praising the Creator and the heart should remember the greatness of Allah. Also recite salawāt on the Holy Prophet (s) and his family (a), continuously.
- 6 - In the holy shrine, avoid all vain talk, dispute or arguments.
- 7 – Do not create any trouble in the holy shrine and follow the instructions of the attendants of the holy shrine.
- 8 – The moment you see the holy burial chamber (*darih*), say takbīr, for real Greatness only belongs to Allah (swt).
- 9 – The Pilgrim should try his best to recite the ziyārat standing. There are several versions of ziyārat recitations, recite each of these in turn during your visits.
- 10 - While reciting ziyārat the pilgrims' face should be towards the blessed *darih*. If you are reciting a Du‘ā then it is better to turn your face towards Qibla.
- 11 – One can recite any one or more of the recommended ziyārats found in Manual of Devotion such as *Mafatīhul Jinan*. Ziyārat Amīnullāh and Ziyārat Jāmi‘ah al-Kabīrah are highly recommended.
- 12 – Do not raise your voice when reciting ziyārat. If you are reading on behalf of a group, stand in a corner without blocking any entrance and distracting others; recite only loud enough to benefit your group.
- 13 - After the recitation of the Ziyārat, perform the two rakā‘at salāt Hadiy-e Ziyārat and present the thawāb of it to the holy soul you are visiting.
- 14 - After completing salāt Hadiy-e Ziyārat, recite the recommended Du‘ās (supplications) and ask Almighty Allah (swt) to grant your wishes. Ensure to pray for

your parents, relative, friends and all those who had requested you to remember them. The best Du‘ās are what are found in *Sahīfa Sajjādiyya*.

15 – Recite the Holy Quran as much as possible and present the thawāb of it to the holy souls of the Ma‘sūmīn (a).

16 – Pray for the safety of Imam al-‘Asr (of the Time) and a hasty return of the Imam al-Mahdi al-Qā’im (af).

17. Beseech Allah (swt) that He grants prosperity and success to Islam and the Muslims in the world, nor forgetting the safety of Mu’mīnīn who are suffering numerous troubled areas.

Resources: www.imamreza.net/eng/imamreza.php?id=6153

Bibi Ma‘sūma of Qum

It is interesting to know that the Imams (a) foretold the birth of this noble lady and her presence in Qum many years before her birth.

1. Qādī Nūrullāh Shūshtarī (d. 1109 A.H) reports from the 6th Imam, Imam Ja‘far al-Sādiq (a):

تُقبَضُ فِيهَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ وُلْدِي، إِسْمُهَا فَاطِمَةٌ بِنْتُ مُوسَى، وَتَدْخُلُ بِشَفَاعَتِهَا شَيْعَتِ الْجَنَّةَ بِالْجُمِيعِ هُمْ

A lady from my children whose name will be Fatima, daughter of Mūsā, will die in Qum. On the Day of Judgement this lady will intercede for all my Shī‘ah to enter Heaven. (Bihār 60:228)

2. ‘Allāmah Majlīsī narrates from Imam al-Sādiq (a):

وَسَتُدْفَنُ فِيهَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ أَوْلَادِي تُسَمَّى فَاطِمَةً، فَمَنْ زَارَهَا وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ

A lady from my children, by the name of Fatima will be buried in Qum. Whoever visits her [shrine], will certainly be admitted to Heaven. (Bihār 48: 317; 60:216)

The writer of the above tradition says that Imam al-Sādiq (A) gave these glad tidings even before the birth of his son, the 7th Imam, Imam Mūsā al-Kāzim (a), the father of Lady Fatima Ma‘sūma (a).

3. From the 8th Imam, Imam Ali al-Ridhā (a):

مَنْ زَارَ الْمَعْصُومَةَ بِقُمْ كَمَنْ زَارَنِي

Whoever visits Ma‘sumah in Qum is like the one who has visited me.” (Nāsikhul Tawārikh 3:68; Rayāhīn 5:35)

This implies that the rewards and benefits awarded to a pilgrim are the same whether he does the pilgrimage of Lady Ma'sūma (a) or Imam al-Ridhā (a)

According to Mirzā Muhammad Taqī (d. 1297 AH), the title of Ma'sūma was given to this noble lady by her brother, Imam al-Ridhā (a), after her death.

4. From the 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad Taqī al-Jawād (a):

مَنْ زَارَ عَمَّيَ بِشَمَّ فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ

Whoever visits my aunt in Qum will enter Heaven. (Bihār 102:265)

Titles of Bibi Ma'sūma of Qum

Karīmat Ahlul Bayt (a): This title, meaning “the Noble one of the family of the Prophet (S)” was given to her by either Imam al-Bāqir (a) or Imam al-Sādiq (a) in a dream seen by Āyatullāh Sayyid Mahmūd Mar'ashī Najafī, the author of *Mashjirat al-'Ālamīyīn*. This noble man was very interested in finding the exact location of the burial place of Lady Fatima Zahra (a), and for this purpose he spent 40 days supplicating, so that he could be privileged with this information. On the 40th night, after the completion of his prayers, he went to sleep and in his dream he saw himself present at the grave of either Imam al-Bāqir (a) or Imam al-Sādiq (a) (both of whom are buried in Jannat al-Baqī ‘ in Medina). Imam (a) said to him: ﴿عَلَيْكَ بِكُرْبَةَ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ﴾ I advise you to go to the Karīmat (Noble one) of the *Ahlul Bayt*.

He thought that by Karīmat Ahlul Bayt, Imam (a) was referring to Lady Fatima Zahra (a), and so he answered, “Yes, I have been supplicating for this very purpose, so that I may know the exact place of the holy grave of this noble personality, enabling me to perform her pilgrimage.” The Imam (a) said, “I meant the holy grave of Lady Fatima Ma'sūma (a) in Qum.” Then the Imam (a) added, “It is Allah's desire that the location of the holy grave of Lady Fatima Zahra (a) be hidden from everyone.” Therefore, the Imam (a) has placed the grave of Lady Fatima Ma'sūma (a) in place of the grave of Lady Fatima Zahra (a), and so all the honor and grandeur that would have been accorded to the grave of Lady Fatima Zahra (A) should be given to the grave of Lady Fatima Ma'sūma (a).

On waking from his dream, the late Mar'ashī made an intention to travel to Qum with his family, in order to perform the pilgrimage of Lady Fatima Ma'sūma (a) and he carried out this intention without any delay. (*Zindaghāni-ye Karīma- e Ahlul Bayt*, p.44) He died in Najaf, in the year 1338 A.H.

Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Shahāb al-Dīn Mar‘ashī Najafī, the illustrious son of the late Mar‘ashī, migrated to Iran in the year 1342 A.H. He often cited that one of the reasons for his emigration to Iran was the dream of his father. After a short stay in Tehran, he entered the seminary in Qum, *al-Hawzah al-Ilmiyah*, in the year 1343 A.H., and here he lived, in the proximity of the Karīmat of Ahlul Bayt – Lady Fatima Ma‘sumah (a) – until his death in the year 1411 A.H. For over sixty years, every morning, the late Shahāb al-Dīn Mar‘ashī, was the first person to perform the pilgrimage of this noble lady. He would wait outside her shrine for the doors to be opened. Even during his final illness before his death, he requested to be carried to her shrine in order to perform her pilgrimage.

Other titles that have been given to Lady Fatima Ma‘sumah (a) are:

1. Tāhirah
2. Hamīdah
3. Bārrah
4. Rashīdah
5. Taqīyah
6. Naqīyah
7. Rādīyah
8. Mardīyah
9. Sayyidah
10. Ukht al-Ridā.

All of these ten titles can be found in her salutation (*Ziyārat*), which has been narrated by Shaykh Muhammad Ali Qummī in his book, *Anwār al-Musha‘shā’īn*. This salutation for Lady Fatima Ma‘sumah (A) is other than the more famous one that has been narrated by ‘Allāmah Majlīsī in *Bihār al-Anwār*, quoting from Imam al-Ridhā (a).

In the salutation (*Ziyārat*) of Lady Fatima Ma‘sumah (A) which has been narrated from Imam al-Ridhā (A) (the salutation is quoted in the final chapter of this book), one reads:

وَأَنْ لَا يَسْتُبْنَا مَعْرِفَتُكُمْ إِنَّهُ وَلِيُّ قَدِيرٌ
“(We ask from Allah) not to deprive us from understanding your status. Indeed, He is the Protector and has Power over everything.”

Abstract from the Ziyrat of Bibi Masuma (a)

That portion from her *Ziyārat* is reproduced below:

السلام عليك يا بنت رسول الله

Peace be on You, O Daughter of the Messenger of Allah!

السلام عليك يا بنت فاطمة و خديجة

Peace be on you, O Daughter of Fatima and Khadījah!

السلام عليك يا بنت امير المؤمنين

Peace be on you, O Daughter of the Commander of the Faithful!

السلام عليك يا بنت الحسن والحسين

Peace be on you, O Daughter of Hasan and Husain!

السلام عليك يا بنت ولیّ الله

Peace be on you, O Daughter of the Vicegerent of Allah!

السلام عليك يا أخت ولیّ الله

Peace be on you, O Sister of the Vicegerent of Allah!

السلام عليك يا عمة ولیّ الله

Peace be on you, O Aunt of the Vicegerent of Allah!

The above relation given of Lady Fatima Ma'suma (A) shows the honorable family that this noble lady comes from and also her nobility due to being a ‘true’ child of the Prophet (S), Lady Khadījah al-Kubrā, Lady Fatima Zahra (A) and the Pure Imams (A).

Masjid-e Jamkarān

This mosque was built in 293 A.H, during the Minor Occultation (*al-Ghaybat al-Sughra*) of Imam Mahdī (a), and according to his recommendation. Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Shahāb al-Dīn Mar`ashī Najafī (d. 1411 A.H) writes, “This mosque was established from the earliest days of the Ghayba (*Bihar* 3:175). Imam al-Mahdi (a) has been continuously seen at this mosque since that time...Shaykh Sadūq enlarged the mosque and during the Safavid era it was repaired several times...I personally have witnessed numerous miraculous events at this mosque...In short, there is no doubt that this mosque is one of the frequenting places of Imam Mahdi (a), and, after Masjid-e Sahlah in Kufa, it is the most probable site for a viewing of the Imam (a).” (*Bar Setigh-e Nur*, p.94)

The mosque is situated six kilometers to the south-east of Qum, and draws large crowds of pilgrims, especially on Tuesday nights. According to many reports, this is the night on which the Imam (a) visits this mosque.

Imam Zadehs in Qum

Various members of the family of Ahlul Bayt (a) migrated to Iran after Imam al-Ridhā (a) moved to Khurāsān. After the martyrdom of the Imam (a), many of them came to settle in Qum, the major Shi'i center at the time. It is estimated that there are over 400

graves of these members of the family of the Imams (*Imām zādehs*) in Qum. (Hadrat-e Masumeh, p. 274)

Some of these graves are within the holy shrine of Lady Fatima Ma‘suma (a). They are situated at different locations in the shrine, some with small domes of their own. These days, the chambers in which their graves are situated also serve as administrative offices for the various departments in charge of the shrine.

Other graves are scattered around the city, for example:

- Mūsā Mubarqa`, son of Imam Taqī (Aa) is buried in Āzar Square, where there is also a large burial site called “Chehel Akhtarān” which was reserved as a burial area for the descendants of the Prophet (S).
- Imāmzādeh Ahmad, the grandson of Imam al-Sādiq (a), is buried at “Darvāzeh Qal`eh” in the southern side of Qum.
- Ali ibn Ja‘far (a) is buried in “Chahār Mardān.”

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Recommended websites:

History of the shrine of Imam Ridhā in Mashhad

<http://www.al-islam.org/history-shrines/history-shrine-imam-ali-b-musa-al-ridha-peace-be-upon-him-history-mashad>

Miracles that happened at the shrine of Imam Ridhā in Mashhad

<https://imamrezamiracles.wordpress.com/>

Ziyārat of Ali ibn Musa al-Ridhā (a)

<http://www.duas.org/ziaratimamreza.htm>

Lady Fatima Ma‘sūma (a) of Qum

<http://www.al-islam.org/lady-fatima-masuma-of-qum-masuma-jaffer>