



ALI 625: Rajab & Sha'ban in Iraq

Ibn Abī Nasr narrates that he asked Abul Hasan al-Ridā (a): in which month should we visit [and perform the *ziyārah* of] Imam al-Husayn (a)? He said: *in the middle of Rajab and in the middle of Sha'bān*. In this webinar we will discuss the spiritual and jurisprudential aspects of performing ziyārat in Iraq, It will inshāAllah benefit those going for ziyārat in Rajab and Sha'ban 1443/ March 2022 Spring Break

Saturday 12 Feb 2022; 2:30 -4 pm NY/Toronto time

Mawaddath of the Ahlul Bayt عليه السلام

Alhamdu lillāh we are the followers of the Ahlul Bayt
'*alayhimus salaam*. Allah i asks us through the Prophet (s)

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ۖ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ
حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

Q 42:23 Say, 'I do not ask you any reward for it except the love of [my] relatives.' Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance its goodness for him. Indeed, Allah is all-forgiving, all-appreciative.

Going to the places of ziyārat with the Ma'rifah (cognizance with recognition) of the holy souls is sign of *mawaddath*.

Importance of the Verse of Love

Mawaddah' derives from the root verb *wadda* meaning 'to love something. Raghīb al-Isfahani in *Mufradat Alfaza al-Quran* also considers wadda to mean 'to wish'. He maintains that wadda is used for both meanings and, in fact, the act of 'wishing for something' involves love and liking for that thing.

Based on numerous proofs, the Shī'ah believe that the **al-qurba** refers to the members of the Household of the Prophet, the Ahlul Bayt, the most distinct of them being 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and the rest of the nine Divinely guided leaders from the progeny of al-Husayn.

In his book *Nahj al-Haqq*, 'Allamah Al-Hilli ranks the verse of mawaddah as the fourth verse from the Quran which establishes the divine authority (imamate) of Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib. Expounding on this verse, he relates a report from Ibn 'Abbas who said, "When the verse of mawwadah was revealed, the Prophet was asked, 'Who are these people whose love has become incumbent upon us?' He replied, 'Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn.'" Thereafter, 'Allāmah Al-Hilli states that the obligation to love someone necessitates the obligation of obeying him (A Probe into the purport and application of the Verse of Love, *Message of Thaqalayn*, v. 14, No. 1)

What is *hasanah* in verse Q 42:23?

Al-Hasan b. Ali (a) addressed the people towards dawn on the night in which Amīrul Mu'minīn (a) died. After praising God and His Messenger and mentioning the merits of his father he said:

I am the (grand) son of the one who brought the good news. I am the (grand) son of he who warned. I am the (grand) son of the man who, with God's permission, summoned (the people) to God. I am the (grand) son of the light that shone out (to the world). I am of the House, from whom God has sent away abomination and whom God has purified thoroughly. I am of the House, for whom God has required love in his Book, when God, the Most High, said:

• قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَمَنْ يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا

Say: I do not ask you for any reward except love for (my) kin. Whoever earns/ does good, We will increase good for himself [42:23]. The good is love for us, the House. (Al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad)

Ziyārat of al-Husayn in Rajab and Sha‘ban

From the *Forty Hadith on Rajab and Sha‘ban* by Academy for Learning Islam:

عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي نَصْرِ بْنِ أَبِي نَصْرٍ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ الرِّضَا (عليه السلام) فِي أَيِّ شَهْرٍ نَزُورُ الْحُسَيْنَ (عليه السلام)؟
فَقَالَ: فِي النِّصْفِ مِنْ رَجَبٍ وَالنِّصْفِ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ.

Ibn Abī Nasr narrates that he asked *Abul Hasan al-Ridā* (عليه السلام): in which month should we visit [and perform the *ziyārah* of] *Imam al-Husayn* (عليه السلام)? He said in the middle of *Rajab* and in the middle of *Sha‘bān*.

(Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Tusi, *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, 6:48; and in his *Misbāh al-Mutahajjid*, 2:807)

In the chapter *Rajab Devotions* in *Mafātih al-Jinan* we read: The first night of *Rajab* is a noble one and there are several observances pertaining to it . . . Third one is to perform *ziyārat* of *Imam al-Husayn*. There is a special *ziyārat* found in *A‘maal of Rajab and Sha‘baan* (pp. 16 -23). It is also recommended for recitation on 1st Day of *Rajab*, 15th Night and Day of *Rajab*, 15th Night and Day of *Sha‘ban*)

Significance of Rajab

From the *Forty Hadith on Rajab and Sha‘ban* by Academy for Learning Islam

Narrated by Abī Sa‘īd al-Khudrī from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: *Indeed, Rajab is the month of Allah, Sha‘bān is my month, and Ramadān is the month of my ummah.* (Hadith 1)

Upon sighting the crescent of Rajab, the Messenger of Allah (s) would say: *O Allah! Bless us in Rajab and Sha‘bān and makes us reach the month of Ramadān. Help us [in these months] with fasting, standing [for prayers], guarding the tongue, casting down the gaze [with modesty], and do not make our [only] share in it [the experiencing of] hunger and thirst.* (Hadith 2)

Abu Sa‘īd al-Khudhrī from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying: *Behold, Rajab - the ‘silent,’ is the month of Allah, and it is a great month. It has been named as al-Asamm only because no other month can be compared with it in sanctity and merits with Allah. The people of the Age of Ignorance (jāhilliyya) (also) used to revere it during their ignorance. When Islam came, it increased it in greatness and excellence.* (Hadith 8)

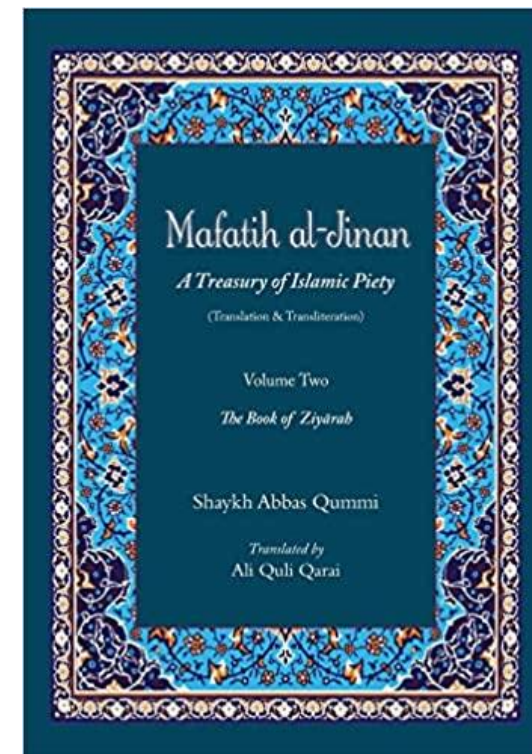
Holy Prophet ﷺ said: *Allah has appointed an angel in the seventh heaven, who is known as al-Dā‘ī. When the month of Rajab enters, that angel announces every night of the month till daybreak: blessings be on those who remember Allah; blessings be on those who are the obedient! And Allah, the Exalted, says: I am in the company of the one who sits in My presence, I respond to the one who obeys Me and forgive the one who seeks My forgiveness. This month is My month, and the servant is My servant, and the mercy is My mercy. So, whoever calls upon Me in this month, I will answer him; whoever asks Me, I will give him; whoever seeks My guidance, I will guide him. And I have made this month a rope between Myself and My servants. So, whoever holds on to it will reach Me.* (Hadith 9)

Maintain taqwā during your trip

وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى
وَاتَّقُونِي يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

- Q 2:197 *And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And take provision, for indeed the best provision is taqwā. So be wary of Me, O you who people of understanding!*
- 'Allāmah Tabātabā'ī: it is a reminder that one's actions are not hidden from Allah; it calls one to piety and fear of Allah, so that **one's acts of worship might not be devoid of the spirit of devotion**; so that one might not go through the external rites or worship with one's mind absent and one's heart forgetful (*Al-Mizan*, v.3, p.115).

Select pictures from Iraq and the new translation of *Mafātīh al-Jinan*



Reflections before departing for the trip

- Gain the knowledge (ma‘rifah) about the holy souls
- Understand & ponder over Arabic recitations
- Order a copy *Mafātīḥ*, Vol.2 from Amazon
- How different will it be if we visited them during lifetimes?
- Total humility & reverence when nearing the haram
- Renewal of the pledge to all six Imams we visit
- How can I change on account of this trip?

Significance of the month of Sha‘ban

From the *Forty Hadith on Rajab and Sha‘ban* by Academy for Learning Islam:

Ibn ‘Abbās who reported that people mentioned about the merits of Sha‘bān in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so he said: it is a distinguished month, and it is my month, the carriers of ‘*arsh*’ (Divine Throne) sanctify it and know its right, and it is the month in which sustenance is increased for the believers. [Sha‘bān] is the month of performing deeds, the good is multiplied seventy times and the evil is diminished, the sins are forgiven, the good deeds are accepted. [In this month] the Omnipotent (God) - the Exalted (and) the Majestic, takes pride in it at His servants, and looks at those who frequently fast in it and those who frequently pray in it, and boasts about them to the carriers of ‘*arsh*. (Hadith 28)

Ibrāhīm b. Maymūn asked Imam al-Ridā عليه السلام: What is the best supplication in this month? So he (the Imam) replied: ‘doing *istighfār*, surely whoever does *istighfār* seventy times in Sha‘bān, is like one who does *istighfār* seventy thousand times in other months.’ I asked him: How should I say it? He said, ‘(simply) say: *astaghfirullāh wa as‘alubut tawbah* -I plead Allah for forgiveness and I beseech repentance from Him.’ (Hadith 29)

Dawūd bin Kathīr al-Raqqī. He said: ‘I asked Abū Abdillāh, Ja‘far bin Muhammad al-Sādiq عليه السلام . . . what is the best [deed] to perform in it?’ He said, giving *sadaqah* (charity) and doing *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness); for whoever gives charity in the month of Sha‘bān, Allah will nurture it the way one of you nurtures his baby camel, until he will meet it on the Day of Resurrection while it is like (the mountain of) Uhud. (Hadith 30)

Memorize and recite this short Du'ā to remain focused during the trip

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ مَسِيْرِيْ عِبْرًا وَصَمْتِيْ تَفَكُّرًا وَكَلَامِيْ ذِكْرًا

O Allah, make my travel an admonition, my silence a reflection and my speech [Your] remembrance. (Bihar, 97:112)

- Avoid unnecessary talk during your trip to Iraq
- Look back at your life to do *istighfār* for past mistakes
- Observe closely how Godly people behave & interact

Ensure not to delay or miss wājib salāt

On account of being a traveler and lacking good facilities, many pilgrims delay their daily prayers or sometimes even miss them. Avoid this totally.

أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع: حَجَّةٌ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا وَصَلَاةٌ فَرِيضَةٌ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ أَلْفِ حَجَّةٍ

Imam al-Sadiq (a): *Performing one Hajj is better than the world and whatever is in it, and saying obligatory prayers is better than one thousand (mustahab) Hajj. (Tahdhib al-Ahkam, 2:240, H.953; Wasā'il H. 4460)*

Read this message from Āyatullāh Sayyid Ali Sistani (dz):

<https://marefatmagazine.wordpress.com/2016/10/31/must-read-message-of-grand-ayatollah-sistani-for-people-going-to-karbala-for-arabeen/>

(see the next two slides for part of the message)

Abstracts from Ayt. Sistani's message

It is one of the essentials of this ziyārat that the pilgrim, in addition to remembering Imam al-Husayn's sacrifices and devotion in the way of Allah, the Exalted, observes the teachings of Islam including those relating to prayer, hijab, self-reform, selflessness and moral etiquette etc. so that his pilgrimage may be a step towards developing and training the soul for accepting these and consolidating their effects until the next pilgrimage.

Fear Allah in relation to your prayers. As stated in the hadith, it is the pillar of your religion and the ascension of the believer, if it is accepted, all other acts will be accepted and if it is rejected, all other acts of worship will also be rejected. It is befitting for believers to offer their prayers on time because Allah loves those who rush to prayer as soon as they hear the call for it.

Nothing precedes salāt at its time

It is not appropriate for a believer to engage in any other acts of worship in the prime for prayer because prayer is the best form of obedience to Allah. It has been narrated from the Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them, that they said: Our intercession (with Allah) will not be won by that person who depreciates or undervalues the prayer. We must know that if we act as per their advice, it is hoped that we shall be resurrected along with their friends. Because it has been reported that Imam Ali (a) said in the Battle of Jamal: *Today we are accompanied by those who are still in the loins of their fathers and uteruses of their mothers.*

(Āyatullāh Sayyid Ali al-Sistani d.z.)

One of the main purpose of ziyārat

عَنْ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ الْوَشَّاءِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الرَّضَا ع يَقُولُ إِنَّ لِكُلِّ إِمَامٍ عَهْدًا فِي عُنُقِ
أَوْلِيَائِهِ وَ شِيعَتِهِ وَ إِنَّ مِنْ تَمَامِ الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعَهْدِ وَ حُسْنِ الْأَدَاءِ زِيَارَةُ قُبُورِهِمْ فَمَنْ زَارَهُمْ
رَغْبَةً فِي زِيَارَتِهِمْ وَ تَصَدِّيقًا بِمَا رَغِبُوا فِيهِ كَانَ أَيْمَتُهُمْ شُفَعَاءَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Hasan b. Ali al-Washha reports that he heard Imam al-Rida (a) saying: For every Imam there is a covenant on the neck of his friends and followers (shi'ahs); the best and complete way to fulfilling this covenant is to visit their graves. One who goes there with a sincere desire of visiting them and with conviction, then their Imams will intercede on their behalf on the Day of Resurrection (*Al-Kafi*, v. 4, p. 567)

Etiquette of ziyārat

- In Shaykh Abbas Qummī's *Mafatīḥul Jinan* in the section on Ziyārat the 1st part covers *ādāb al-Safar*
- If possible, travel on select days. Better to travel on Sat, Tue & Thu; avoid Mon, Wed & Fri before zuhr.
- Fast for 3 days: Wed, Thu & Friday
- إِنَّ أَبِي . . . اشترى السلامة مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِمَا تيسَّرَ
- Say some of recommended Du'ās & the five suras
- مِنْ فَقْهِ الْمُسَافِرِ حِفْظُ نَفَقَتِهِ

Rights of fellow pilgrims (zawwār)

- Al-Bāqir (a): *It does not matter if one visits this House if he does not possess three traits: Cautiousness which prevents him from sinning; forbearance which helps him rule over his anger; and good interaction with those who are with him.*
- Imam al-Sadiq (a): *You should be a good companion to those who accompany you, speak less and say only that which is good, mention Allah increasingly, wear purified clothes, perfume, Ghusl before going to holy places, be humble, establish a lot of prayers, say salawāt, help needy ones, not look at (what is forbidden)*
- Imam al-Kazim (a): *whoever prays for his brothers (in belief) in his absence, is called from the Throne, ‘(O Servant of Allah) you will have one hundred thousand times as much reward as one may receive for his prayer*

Wudhu made simple

- You can carry it on board, if it is 3 oz. or less,
- Easy to take it in your purse or pocket when going to Haram
- Ensure that you spray enough water
- Differentiate between the two washings and the two wiping
- Use bathrooms where possible, otherwise use spray bottles when travelling by plane, trains or coaches
- Renew your wudhu using spray bottle whilst in the Haram if you would like to keep your spot
- Ladies to ensure that not to expose hands & feet
- Check <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7q4pWFseBMk>

Saying salāt on board - 1

- If you are scheduled to arrive at your destination early enough to go through security, perform wudhu, determine Qibla and find a suitable place to say your prayers then you are allowed to say your prayers at the destination, provided they do not get qadhā. Otherwise, you need to say your prayers on board.
- 1. Say Qasr salāt on board, except if you are a frequent traveler (*kathīrus safar*). Go to <https://al-m.ca/travel/> for easy rules
- 2. When traveling, it is advisable to maintain the *tabārah* (ritual purity) of your body and clothes till at least prayer time. For those who can retain their wudhu for longer time, it is advisable to perform the wudhu with the niyyat of *qurbatan ilallāh* (seeking nearness to God) before departing.

Saying salāt on board – 2

- 3. Ensure that the prayer time has begun before you say prayers. Use of app from www.halaltrip.com is helpful in finding prayer times when flying. Alternatively, if you have info on local sunrise and sunset timings while you are traveling then it is helpful in determining prayer timings.
- 4. Face completely towards qibla direction when saying takbīratul ihrām (i.e., the saying of first *Allāhu akbar* after the *niyyat*). Use of app from www.halaltrip.com is helpful in determining qibla direction on board. Alternatively, you can use TV screens in the airplane or ask member of the crew about the direction to Makkah. Do not be concerned about the change in direction of the airplane when you are saying your prayers. Of course, you will again determine qibla direction when you begin the next prayer, such as ‘asr after zuhr and ‘ishā after maghrib prayer.

Saying salāt on board - 3

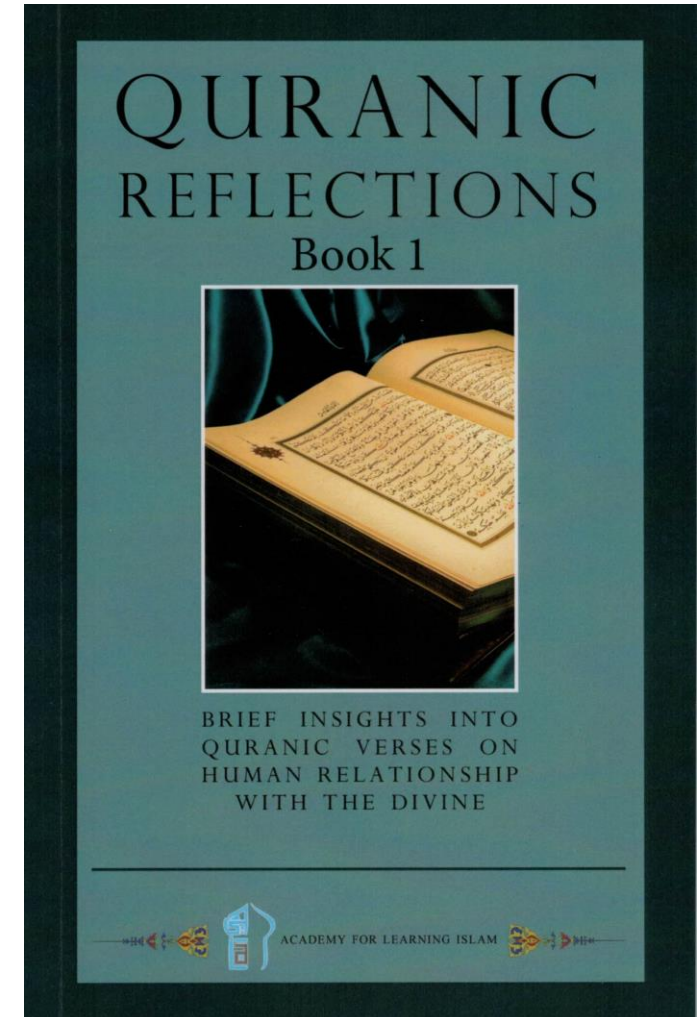
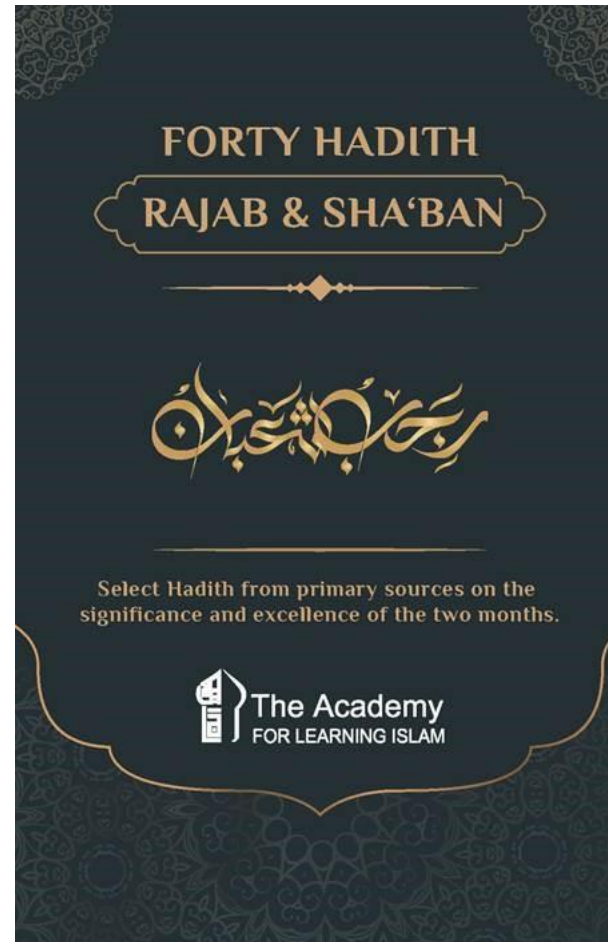
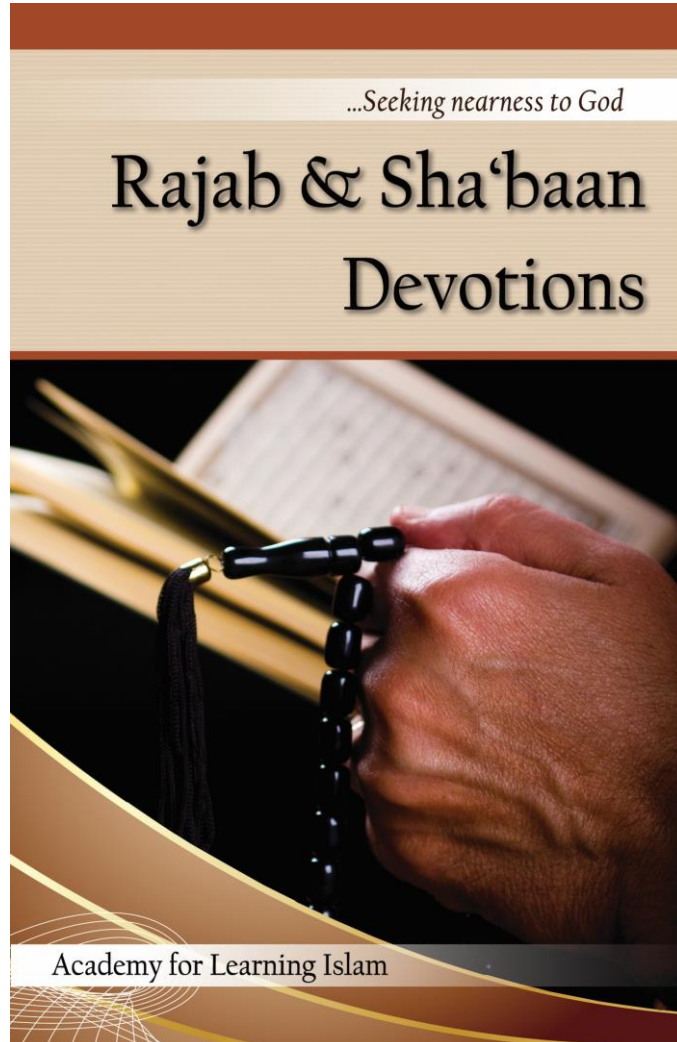
5. Where possible observe all qiyām (standing), rukū (bowing), sajda (prostrating) and qu‘ūd (sitting) positions required in salāt. This can be done in the exit rows or in designated prayer places on some Muslim flights (e.g., Iran Air, Saudi Airline). Otherwise, after rising and facing towards Qibla during takbīratul ihrām, say your prayers on the assigned seats. Use gestures (*‘ishāra*) to determine the four position in salāt, such as sitting straight in lieu of qiyām, slight tilting for qu‘ūd, bending for ruku, further bending for sajad. (Note there is a difference of opinion between scholars on whether one should say the prayers in the aisles, washrooms, and serving corners/sections of the plane or confine to saying prayers in the designated seats. You may check with a local scholar and decide accordingly. It is essential that a Muslim does not face unnecessary harassments or profiling by airline crew or security officials. Saying prayer is personal devotion between the Almighty Lord and a humble servant.)

Praying full in Iraq despite being a traveler

- 1) Haram of Imam al-Husayn in the Haa'ir
- 2) Masjid Kūfa, rather the entire city of Kūfa
- One prayer is equal to 1000 prayers
- 1 wājib prayer = 1hajj with the Prophet; 1 mustahab prayer = umrah with the Holy Prophet (s).
- If people were to know its merits, they would come to it crawling (6I)
- Special prayer of Hajaat in the middle of it
- 1000 prophets & 1000 awsiyaa have prayed in it
- It will be the venue of payer for Imam Mahdi
- 3) Masjid Sahla – considered as part of new Kūfa

Useful resources on Rajab and Sha'ban

www.academyofislam.com/publications



References and additional material

- *Chronicles of the Martyrdom of Imam Husayn*, M. Rayshahrī, Tr. Abbas Jaffer, ICAS, London, 2020.
- *Mafātīḥ al-Jinan*, Sh Abbas Qummī, Tr. Ali Quli Qarai, v. 1, 2019.
- History of Holy places: <http://www.al-islam.org>
- Significance of ziyārat: www.al-islam.org/revolution/2.htm
- Travel rules: <https://al-m.ca/travel/>
- Ziyārat manuals with translation: <http://www.asserattours.com>
- <https://www.academyofislam.com/ali-374/>
- <http://www.duas.org/walkoffree.htm>
& <http://www.duas.org/ziaratiraq.htm>