



Ultimate Journey of Peace, Love & Humanity on Arba'een

Arba'een is a Shia Muslim religious observance that occurs 40 days after the Day of Ashura (the day that the tragedy of Karbala took place). It commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussain bin Ali (peace be upon him), the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) which falls on the 20th day of the month of Satar (second Lunar month).

It is said that the Day of Arba'een is the day on which Hussain's family returned to the land of Karbala, to properly bid farewell to the fallen heroes and finally grieve for their loved ones. Arba'een is also observed 40 days after the death of a family member or loved one. Forty days is the usual length of the time of mourning in many Islamic cultures. Arba'een walk is one of the largest pilgrimage gatherings on Earth, in which over 20 million people go to the city of Karbala in Iraq.

Why is so much importance given to the performance of the Ziyarat of Ar-ba'een and the observance of Arba'een (40 days of mourning)?

If we look at studies dealing with bringing a lifestyle change, we notice the time period emphasized to bring about a change is usually 6 weeks which is about the same time period as 40 days (to be exact it is 42 days). In the book "40 Days to Personal Revolution, A Breakthrough Program to Radically Change Your Body and Awaken the Sacred Within Your Soul", the author "Baron Baptiste" explains the significance of forty days: "Why forty days? Because the number 40 holds tremendous spiritual significance in the realm of transformation. Jesus wandered in the desert for forty days in order to experience purification and come to a greater understanding of himself and his mission. Moses and his people traveled through the desert for forty years before arriving at their home in the holy land. Noah preserved the sacredness of life by sailing his ark for forty days and forty nights. According to the Kabbalah, the ancient Jewish mystical text, it takes forty days to ingrain any new way of being into our system"

Thus, as we perform the Ziyarat of Arba'een and commemorate the Arba'een, 40 days of mourning of Imam Hussain (pbuh), we hope and pray that this forty days of remembrance of Imam Hussain (pbuh), brings about a transformation in us by which we can continue to follow the path of Imam Hussain (pbuh) and carry on his message of upholding justice with true faith and a strong sense of sacrifice!

The day of Arba'een, Today

Today, almost 1400 years later, the Day of Arba'een is remembered by millions of people around the world. It is marked as a day to pay tribute to the sacrifice of Hussain (pbuh) for social justice.

By performing the Ziyarat of Arba'een, we pledge that we will continue to follow the path of justice and righteousness and will reject injustice and speak up against the oppressors of the time.

Typically, on this day people organize large marches in cities across the world to symbolize the eternal nature of Hussain's revolution and to show they stand for social justice, compassion and dignity.

In recent years a tradition of walking 80km from Najaf (the resting place of Ali(pbuh)the father of Hussain) to Karbala has been reignited. Every year since, the number has been rising steadily from 17 million pilgrims to at least 23) million.

People from all walks of life and all corners of the globe make the journey, despite the imminent threat of terrorists who have vowed to attack the pilgrims.

Along the 80km stretch from Najaf to Karbala volunteers distribute free food and drinks to those undertaking the pilgrimage, as well as offering places to relax, wash and sleep.

Arba'een Day is now the largest annual peaceful gathering in the world, with numbers set to increase significantly every year.

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