

# *Arbaeen Message from His Eminence Ayatullah Al-Udhma al-Sayyid al-Sistani (Dama Dhilluhu)*

The following is an extract from the Question & Answer section of [www.sistani.org](http://www.sistani.org) pertaining to Arbaeen.

## **Question:**

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful

To,

Grand Ayatullah Sistani (may Allah grant him long life):

Salamun alaikum warahmatullah wa barakatuh

We are a number of pilgrims setting out to Karbala to attend the Arbaeen and pay tribute to Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. In order for us to benefit from this spiritual journey and earn the reward of visiting the tomb of the Chief of Martyrs as well as to know what we do not know, we are in need of your fatherly advice which we hope to spread across all segments of the community. May Allah grant you long life. We earnestly call on you to furnish us with your advice and pray for us.

A group of Momeneen

## **Answer by Grand Ayatullah Sistani (may Allah grant him long life):**

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful

Praise belongs to Allah and peace and benedictions of Allah be upon our master, Muhammad and his pure progeny. It is befitting for the momeneen (believers) whom Allah has granted success to perform pilgrimage, to note that Allah, the Exalted, selected prophets and their noble successors from amongst His servants to be divine proofs and authority over people and that whose teachings people should follow to be guided aright. Allah has encouraged people to visit the sacred sites so that those infallible leaders are continuously remembered and held in reverence. Since those nobles are the best examples of servitude to Allah, the Glorified and jihad in His way and sacrifice for the cause of His everlasting religion, visiting their shrines, commemorating them and narrating their stories will remind the memeneen of Allah, the Exalted, His doctrines and injunctions.

Hence, it is one of the essentials of this pilgrimage that the pilgrim, in addition to remembering Imam Hussein'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 etiquettes 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. It is only by so doing that attending these ceremonies will be practically the same as attending the lessons of the Imam, peace be upon him.

In fact, we have not been in the time of the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) to learn from them directly and be educated by them, but Allah, the Exalted, has preserved their conducts for us and has persuaded us to visit them as our role models. As the contemporaries of the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) lived with them and were put to test, Allah also wants to test us as to how far we are sincere in our desire to live with them and follow their teachings. Hence, we must be careful lest we should not falsely desire to see them. 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.S) 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."

Therefore, it is not difficult for each of us who cherishes the hope to act according to the teachings of the Ahlul-Bayt and obey them to be educated in accord with their educational methods and benefit from their manners.

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.

Reference:

<http://www.sistani.org/english/qa/02403>

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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. 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 or attained by that person who depreciates or undervalues the prayer".

About Imam Hussein's special attention to prayer on the Day of Ashura, it has been reported that he told his companion who reminded him of the prime time for the prayer:

"You reminded me of prayer, may Allah include you amongst those who are conscious of (their duty to) prayer." Then and there he established prayer under a rain of arrows.

Fear Allah in sincerity inasmuch as the value and barakah of one's deeds depends on how far he is sincere in performing them for Allah's sake. Because Allah will not accept any deeds which are not purely for Him. It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) that he said during Muslims' emigration from Mecca to Medina: "Whoever migrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, he has migrated to Him and whoever migrates to make worldly gains, he has migrated to the world. Allah will reward sincere deeds to the extent that it will increase to seven hundred folds and He doubles the rewards for whomsoever He wants."

Hence, it is necessary on the pilgrims to remember Allah and recite zikr of Allah and be mindful of every step and every deed to be for Allah's sake. They should know that Allah has not bestowed anyone with a blessing so precious as sincerity in belief, sayings and conducts. An act which is devoid of sincerity ends with the end of life in this world whereas a sincere act will be lasting and blessed in this world and the hereafter.

Fear Allah in observing modest clothing which is amongst the most important thing that the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) heeded to even in the most difficult circumstances and they were the best role models in terms of observing modest clothing. Imam Hussein (A.S) was not hurt as much as he was hurt by the enemy due to violation of his dignity and respect. It is, therefore, necessary for all pilgrims especially ladies to observe modesty in their conducts, clothing and appearance and to avoid whatever is deemed a violation of this e.g. wearing close-fitting clothes, mixing up in an abominable way with members of the opposite gender and wearing inadmissible jewelry. In fact, it is befitting for believers that in order for them to keep the sacred ceremony untainted, they have to, as far as possible, adhere to the highest levels of modesty.

We pray to Almighty Allah to elevate the position of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his descendants, and his pure family (A.S), due to the sacrifices they made in the way of Allah and their efforts to guide His creatures. May He increase salawat (greeting) and blessings on them as He has sent greetings to previous prophets especially Ibrahim and his family.

We also pray to Allah to bestow barakah upon the pilgrimage of the pilgrims of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him and accept it in the best way as He accepts the deeds of His noble servants so that they may, through their lifestyle and deeds in this pilgrimage, be a role model for others for the rest of their lives and be rewarded for their love of and obedience to the household of the Prophet (A.S) and for preaching his mission.

Let's hope that on the Day of Judgment when everyone of the people are called with his Imam, they (pilgrims) are called with the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) and that those who are martyred in this way, they are, due to their sacrifices and the sufferings which they have gone through, resurrected with Hussein, peace be upon him and his friends.

Verily, He is all Hearing, Ever Responsive.

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