

## Conclusion

The unforgettable date was September 3, 2003; it was then that I returned home to Iraq after 32 long years in exile, one year of which was split between teaching in Saudi Arabia and spending some time in Beirut, Lebanon, waiting to board a plane to the U.S. for my higher studies. I had to rent a taxi-cab from Amman, Jordan to Baghdad, Iraq, a long trip which I shall never forget.

I did not feel embarrassed at all when I burst in tears at the first sight of Iraqi land, albeit it was a desert land. Desert land is precious, too; everything is precious when it comes to one's homeland. My eyes took a good while to completely empty their tears. Luckily, I was the only passenger. Yet the first thought that crossed my mind was to visit the Shrine in my home town, al-Kadhimiyya, where I spent most of my life in Iraq, although I was not born there.

This scene of tears repeated itself the moment I saw the glitter of the four golden minarets and two huge golden domes of the Shrine of two Imams al Kadhimiyya city in northwestern Baghdad is blessed to house. I fell on the threshold and kissed it, turned to the first gate slab and kissed it, then turned to the left and did likewise while my tears did not stop because they had by then replenished their supply as if they knew that I would soon need them.

My older brother, Sarni, accompanied me; without him as my tour guide, I would not have known where to go, for Baghdad changed during all those years, so much so that months after my return, I still did not know at times whether I was in the north or south, east or west.

People in the West, where I spent 31 of those years, cannot easily understand such sentiments, but that is their problem; most of them are not sentimental; tears find themselves reluctant to trickle down their cheeks except rarely.

For any Muslim who follows the faith of the Prophet's immediate family, known as Ahl al-Bayt ' People of the Household of the Prophet (s.a.w), the sight of any shrine housing the remains of a direct descendant of the Prophet (s.a.w) causes tears to flow and flow. It is genuine love mixed with sorrow and grief for the suffering those saints had to undergo at the hands of those who were jealous of them, of their status, of their immaculate characters, of people's attachment to them.

Such love manifested itself in the conduct of the three saints discussed in this book; it is this love that turns martyrdom into a most anticipated dream, the ultimate desire, and the most precious wish. Some saints are granted such a wish, as is the case with these two men and one woman, while others are given a respite.

The Almighty fares with His servants as He pleases; He has a plan and a term for each and every one of them, there is no doubt about it. He pulled me out of Iraq in 1971 and enabled me to reach the United States the next year because He had a plan for me, the undeserving servant of His that I am, and this is a blessing for which I can never ever thank Him enough. Had this not taken place, I would not have produced the literature which thousands of people worldwide have read, enjoyed and learned from and many more will hopefully do the same.

The list of books and other publications which He has enabled me to write, edit or translate keeps getting crowded with more and more works; it is a privilege and a blessing which He has bestowed on me. Look me up through Google and see for yourself.

I was warned by many Muslims in Atlanta, Georgia, where I lived from 1972 to 1979, about translating works of martyr Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, but I did not heed the warnings. Then I was warned again when I started translating Al-Muraja 'at: A Shi 'i-Sunni Dialogue which was written by Sharafud-Din Sadr ad-Din al Mousawi, and again I did not heed them. Who warned me? Those who love this vanishing world did.

If your heart inclines towards Ahl al-Bayt, there will be no room in it for loving this vanishing world, this fleeting life. Such is the case with the hearts of these three saints; they were not discouraged from doing what they thought was the right thing by the tyranny, might and means of the "Butcher of Baghdad" and those who supported him in the West, in the U.S. in particular, and in the Arab world where stooges and misfits still rule the masses, where there are still the likes of Saddam and his clique holding the reins of power with support from the same people who brought Saddam to power, kept him in power and ultimately created a Frankenstein of him.

Will these folks, particularly the anti-Shi' a rulers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf area, learn that faith cannot be fought with force? Will they realize that many thrones were burnt by the blood of martyrs? I seriously doubt it. Their minds are too close to even consider this thought. Nobody likes to think about nightmares. . Wassalamo Alaikom.

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