

Introduction

Islamic Iran is proud to host the blessed body of the Apostle of Allah (S)'s progeny, Imam al-Ridha (a.s.), the learned of the Prophet's household, the source of blessings, and the eighth infallible Imam. Each year it receives millions of eager and enamored pilgrims who come here to pay homage to the affectionate and gracious Imam.

With the blessings of this benevolent Imam, divine graces are dispensed to all devotees of Ahl al-Bayt (a.s.), especially to the followers and Shi'as of his holiness; and this piece of land in Khurasan is a piece of paradise which prides itself on the world of angels and is ever the focus of attention to the heavenly cherubim, just as it is a focus of attention and guidance for the people of the world. Divine angels frequent around the sacred mausoleum along with his earnest pilgrims.

And what great blessings and graceful effects has the Almighty God imparted on behalf of this magnanimous Imam and his pilgrimage to his pilgrims and enthusiasts.

Paying pilgrimage to Imam al-Ridha (a.s.) and the torrential presence of the pilgrims in his heavenly sanctuary does always strengthen religious spirit and spirituality, and the remembrance of the Hereafter, concentration on Almighty Allah and His ordinances in the hearts of people and the Islamic society.

In that pure atmosphere radiating with the light of Imamate and *wilaya*, the eager pilgrims feel peace and purity of the heart, express their needs, and enjoy plenty of divine blessings through the noble Imam.

Thus, in order to provide better and deeper enjoyment of this pilgrimage, we would draw the attention of the interested pilgrims to a brief account of that noble Imam's precious life and attributes so that they may go on pilgrimage with more knowledge and, thereby, receive more divine blessings and attention from the Eighth Holy Imam 'Ali b. Musa al-Ridha upon whom be thousands of salutations and praises.

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