

Like a dove I fly towards you – Visiting Karbala - Part 3

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A highlight for me whilst in Najaf was visiting Ayatollah Sistani in his house. The house he has not left in 5 years due to those who want him dead, and even though he lives 4 minutes away from where Imam Ali (as) is buried, he cannot visit him. After the tight security checks, we sat with his eminence. I was sitting there, looking at this feeble 90 year old man, wondering why I couldn't take my eyes off of him. I was just looking at him as he talked, in awe. On my way out, I kissed his hand, and wanted to kiss his head but any sudden movements and the guards would tear your shoulder, so I asked instead. He heard me say 'head', and wiped his hand across my forehead. I felt as if a cool breeze had just blown past me. As I got up, his guard gave me a ring from the Sayed.

Among my other significant visits were those of the great personalities of the past, like Maytham al Tammar and Kumail Ibn Ziyad. Once I reached Masjid Kufa, and saw the place from which Muslim Ibn Aqeel was thrown from, I visited Muslim, along with Mokhtar Al Thaqafi. Masjid Kufa was a special place, a place where a countless number of Allah's SWT prophets had passed through and prayed. I hadn't prayed that many prayers in one night before. Here was also the place Imam Ali (as) was struck on the head whilst in sujood, and whilst looking at the exact spot where it happened, you can almost feel Imam's words echo 'By Allah, I have succeeded'. I also visited Imam Ali's (as) house in Kufa.. A special room is designated to the place where Imam Hassan (as) did ghusl on his dead body. We ended this night by reciting the munajat of Imam Ali (as) in his own house. Mawlaya ya mawlay.

During the trip, the visit to Samarra was canceled due to the bomb targeting of the Shia in that area. I was so disappointed to miss out on visiting Imam Ali Al-Hadi (as), and Imam Hassan Al-Askari (as). I would have gone had I had the choice, though I was not called there this time, and it only gives me another reason to revisit Iraq. As for Kathimiya, I did visit it in Baghdad. There was a different feeling in this amazing mosque. My heart has never felt as much relief as it did here. Sending my salams to Imam Musa AlKathim (as) and Imam Muhammad Al Jawad (as) felt so purifying. In this place, you feel at rest, like each breath you take is true. I know this description of true breath may not make sense to everyone, but I hope it's understandable. Imam Musa (as), babul Hawa'ij. When you are there, and call upon Allah SWT to answer your prayers in the name of these two patient souls, you truly feel like your prayers have been .answered as soon as you ask