

Have you ever heard of the world's largest peaceful gathering held annually?

Unbelievable as it may sound, every year millions of people from all over the world walk a long path full of new wonderful attractions to give their souls a soothing caress.

On this route, there is no need to worry about food, bedding, accommodation, or resting place; all are provided free for the participants by thousands of volunteers and well-wishers.

**Black and white, male and female, young and old, people from different cultures** and ethnic groups...gather together united in hearts to quench their thirst for the deepest peace in this unparalleled path.

En route, you come across hosts who share with you what they have with boundless generosity. They lovingly massage the tired feet of the walkers and serve water, food, snacks and hot or cold drinks.

In that friendly and welcoming atmosphere, volunteers even do your laundry for free! It is as if you have known the participants, whether they be fellow walkers or the hosts, for years.

You see local children eagerly spraying perfume on your clothes; just a few steps away, **an elderly man kindly offers you a bowl of dates bought with his meagre earnings** so that you can maintain your energy along the way.

At times, a little girl runs after you to carry your backpack for a short distance and at a **small roadside stall on the way, a young man offers you a cup of fresh tea. A little bit** further away, a boy insists that you let him polish your shoes.

Doesn't it seem strange that all these services are provided at no cost?

How is it possible to see these scenes in today's world?!" you may ask. Your eyes bear witness to that, "Yes, they are all real, so real that every year over **20'000'000** people come here to attend this gathering and walk the 80k route."

"What is the reason for all this kindness and altruism?" you would ask out of curiosity.

You would hear a voice, saying, "The one word that is the answer to all this is **LOVE.**"

Yet another question pops into your mind, "What kind of love can kindle in them this longing to be present here and create all these incredible scenes?"

And you will be told, "a love like that for **Jesus Christ,**"

"a love like that for purity and honesty,"

"a love like that for fellow human beings and sacrifice,"

"a love like that for relieving man of his daily worries."

This love is the universal language and creed of the lovers who take the **Arbaeen Peace Walk** from around the world.

This love never dies; it absorbs you and fills your heart with everlasting peace. You will ask, "Who is this person they want to meet? Why is love of him so ingrained in the hearts of his lovers?"

Then you will realize that he is the one on whom you can rely and that you do not need a previous appointment to open your heart to him in order to find peace in the storms of grief.

If you take one step towards him, he will take ten steps towards you. He is the only person who loves you honestly and unconditionally, the one who takes your hand to raise you up with him.



J O U R N E Y *of* L O V E

w w w . m e l o d y o f s t e p s . c o m

# J O U R N E Y of L O V E

20  
MILLION



## LARGEST ANNUAL MEETING

In recent years, more than 20 million pilgrims have visited Karbala, setting a record for the largest annual pilgrimage.

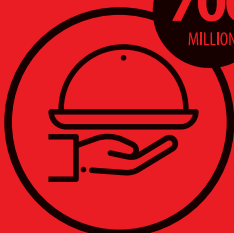
## LONGEST LASTING MEAL IN THE WORLD

22 million pilgrims do not need to take anything with them on the 80-kilometer journey, except for the clothes they are wearing. No food, no drinks, no bed linen. Just keep going.



80  
KM

700  
MILLION



## BIGGEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ARE PROVIDED WITH FOOD

Over 50 million meals per day are served during Arbaeen, which is approximately 700 million meals for the duration of the pilgrimage.

# Hussain

Q Search Google for the Arbaeen Walk

**1400 years ago, he made the supreme sacrifice of his life and the lives of his dearest ones** to bestow this love on the whole humanity so that this love can boil in the eager hearts and be a refuge for the oppressed and the broken-hearted.

**He is the one who inspired Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi to fight for freedom.**

He is the one whom Edward Brown considers the source of all virtues.

He is the one about whom Edward Gibbon, a British historian, says, "In a distant age and climate, the tragic scene of the death of him will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader."

And it is with regard to him that Washington Irving states, "[Your] soul is immortal. O my hero, my paragon of braveness. Oh Hussain!"

He is "**Hussain**", the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); the one who gave up all he had for the realization of love, peace and justice. He and his 72 companions took a **firm stand against an army of 30000, the devotees of the tyrants who oppressed the people** under their rule. He was martyred alongside his family and companions to establish peace and justice. Although the oppressive army won the battle, it was a false victory. Just look at the shrine of Hussain in Karbala and you will understand who stood victorious. Today, Karbala is the destination of lovers of all faiths and creeds, those who seek love, peace and justice for the entire humanity.

Each year they bring their scorching loving hearts and tired feet to his tomb to be saturated with his love and send the message of friendship to the world; every year this gathering gets larger and more glorious, as more lovers join in from all over the world and walk to the holy shrine of Hussain in Karbala.

**It is Hussain's and his companions' spirit of honesty and sacrifice that acts as a magnet and** draw a population of over twenty million, regardless of their beliefs, to his holy shrine forty days after his martyrdom anniversary.

Yes!

The love for Hussain is an unbelievable display of unity and solidarity. These consistent, pleasant and melodious beat of steps will soon bring enduring and everlasting world peace, around the axis of love for the perfect human, for every single soul regardless of color, race, religion or nationality.



Photo by Alan Serhall

## EMILY GARTHWAITE

ENGLISH PHOTOJOURNALIST

Despite the unparalleled scale, and despite being both the largest number of people fed for free and the biggest volunteer gathering in the world, the commemoration is rarely covered by international media.



Photo by Elliott & Fry

## THOMAS CARLYLE

SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHER

The best lesson which we get from the tragedy of Karbala is that Hussain and his companions were rigid believers in God. They illustrated that the numerical superiority does not count when it comes to the truth and the falsehood. The victory of Hussain despite his minority, marvels me.