

Al-Ha'ir al-Husayni includes the [mausoleum](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Mausoleum) of Imam al-Husayn (a) and its surrounding area.

**Al-Ha'ir al-Husayni**

**Al-Ḥāʾir al-Ḥusaynī** (Arabic: اَلحائِر الحُسَینی) is a special area around the grave of [Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) in which the traveler can say his prayer in complete form instead of [shortened form](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Shortened_prayer). The term was first used in [hadiths](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Hadith) from [Imam al-Sadiq (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Sadiq_(a)) about the area around Imam al-Husayn's (a) [mausoleum](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Mausoleum). The shortest alleged limit of the al-Ha'ir is the area around the mausoleum with 22 meters in diameter. The building of the [holy shrine of Imam al-Husayn (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Holy_shrine_of_Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) was destroyed by the order of ['Abbasid caliphs](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=%27Abbasid_caliphs&action=edit&redlink=1) several times.

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**Meaning and Appellation**

The word "al-ha'ir" (Arabic: الحائِر) literally means a wanderer. It also refers to a pit with a flat center and high surroundings such that if some water accumulates there, it will have no way out. The word "al-Ha'ir" also refers to [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala).[[1]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-1) People related to this area are called "al-Ha'iri".[[2]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-2)

There are different views about why the place is called "al-Ha'ir", including the view that after [al-Mutawakkil al-'Abbasi](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Al-Mutawakkil_al-%27Abbasi&action=edit&redlink=1) ([232](https://en.wikishia.net/view/232)/847 - [247](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=247&action=edit&redlink=1)/861) ordered his agents to destroy Imam al-Husayn's (a) mausoleum and submerge it with water, the water stood still near the grave and did not flow there; thus it came to be called "al-Ha'ir".[[3]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-3) Some people rejected the appellation, since according to hadiths from [Imam al-Sadiq (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Sadiq_(a)), the place was called so before the period of al-Mutawakkil.[[4]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-4) The second view is that early in the 2nd/8th century, a wall was built around Imam al-Husayn's (a) grave, and it seems that the construction of the wall, presumably in the [Umayyad](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Umayyad&action=edit&redlink=1) period, was aimed at facilitating the inspection of the visitors. A third view takes the word "al-Ha'ir" to be a code for Karbala or Imam al-Husayn's (a) shrine against Umayyad strict rules.[[5]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-5)

The word "al-ha'ir" was first used in a hadith from Imam al-Sadiq (a) concerning the virtues and manners of visiting Imam al-Husayn (a).[[6]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-6) It was used to refer to the area around the mausoleum.[[7]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-7) The word was gradually used more frequently by Shiites to refer to the mausoleum and its surrounding area.[[8]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-8)

**Jurisprudential Rulings**

A specific jurisprudential ruling applies to this area in the case of a [traveler's prayers](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Traveler%27s_prayers). The ruling is that it is permissible and even supererogatory for a traveler to say his or her prayers completely if he or she stays in these places for shorter than 10 days. This is the most advocated [fatwa](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Fatwa&action=edit&redlink=1) of Shiite scholars of [fiqh](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Fiqh), though it is still permissible for such a traveler to say [shortened prayers](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Salat_Qasr&action=edit&redlink=1). The same ruling also applies to the [sanctuary of Mecca](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Sanctuary_of_Mecca), that of the Holy [Prophet's (s) mosque](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Prophet%27s_(s)_mosque&action=edit&redlink=1) and the [Mosque of Kufa](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Mosque_of_Kufa).[[9]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-9) The ruling does not apply to the case of [fasting](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Fasting) (and fasting is still not permissible for the traveler).

In [hadiths](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Hadith) that are the sources of this ruling, the area in which a traveler can say his or her prayers completely is called "haram" (sanctuary), al-Ha'ir and "near the mausoleum". [[10]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-10)

**Confines**

The confines of the area called "al-Ha'ir al-Husayni" are specified in different ways in different hadiths, including with criteria such as [parasang](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Parasang) and cubit.[[11]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-11) In order to reconcile these apparently conflicting hadiths, some scholars maintain that all the areas mentioned in all of these hadiths should be respected, though they enjoy different degrees of respectability; the closer the relevant area is to the mausoleum, the more respectable it is.[[12]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-12) The shortest distances mentioned in hadiths for the confines of the shrine are 20 and 25 cubits from the mausoleum. Accordingly the approximate diameter of the al-Ha'ir will be 22 meters; this reveals the area of the shrine at the time of Imam al-Sadiq (a),[[13]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni" \l "cite_note-13) on the one hand, and is in conformity with the view of those who take the al-Ha'ir to include only the martyrdom zone of Imam al-Husayn (a) and the [mosque](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Mosque), on the other hand. Some [faqihs](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Faqih) have appealed to parasang distances mentioned in some hadiths in order to generalize the ruling to the whole city of [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala),[[14]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-14) but most of the faqihs take the ruling to apply only to a more limited area.[[15]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-15) However, there is a dispute among them as to the exact confines of the al-Ha'ir, including:

* The mausoleums of Imam al-Husayn (a) and other [martyrs of Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Martyrs_of_Karbala) except the shrine of [Abu l-Fadl al-'Abbas (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Abu_l-Fadl_al-%27Abbas_(a)).[[16]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-16)
* The shrine with the whole courtyard before its expansion during the [Safavid](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Safavid) period.[[17]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-17)
* Only the room of the grave of Imam al-Husayn (a).[[18]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-18)
* The area around the [darih](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Darih).[[19]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-19)

**Expansion**

The construction of buildings over the mausoleum of Imam al-Husayn (a) dates back to the first years after his [martyrdom](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Martyrdom&action=edit&redlink=1). There are accounts of there being a box and a ceiling as well as a small building over the mausoleum until [65](https://en.wikishia.net/view/65)/684, but it seems that [al-Mukhtar al-Thaqafi](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Mukhtar_al-Thaqafi) (killed in [67](https://en.wikishia.net/view/67)/687) constructed the first building over the mausoleum after his triumph in his uprising for the vengeance of Imam al-Husayn (a) in 66/685. This brick construction had two gates and one dome.[[20]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-20) The mausoleums of other martyrs of Karbala were located outside of this construction.[[21]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-21) Some hadiths from Imam al-Sadiq (a) concerning the manners of visiting Imam al-Husayn's (a) mausoleum imply that the building was still there until his time.[[22]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-22)

In later periods, people or governments frequently reconstructed the shrine and the al-Ha'ir, including the construction of courtyards and new porches or expanding the existing ones, building mosques, building boxes over the grave, or building [darihs](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Darih), reconstructing the wall around the shrine, changing the stones of the floor, repairing or gilding the dome, decorating the minarets, the walls and the porches with gold or tiles or mirrors, donating carpets and lighting devices, and constructing water tanks.[[23]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-23)

**Visiting Imam al-Husayn (a)**

[Imam al-Husayn's (a) shrine](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Holy_Shrine_of_Imam_al-Husayn_(a)) is highly respected by Shiites. Shiite Imams (a) always encouraged Shiites to visit the shrine by mentioning the virtues and the position of al-Ha'ir al-Husayni. There are many hadiths in which the divine rewards of visiting the shrine as well as its manners are elaborated.

**Approaches of the Governments**

Different governments took different approaches to the construction or destruction of the al-Ha'ir; for example, in the [Umayyad](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Umayyad&action=edit&redlink=1) period, though they were very strict with respect to the visitors of the shrine,[[24]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-24) they never destroyed it,[[25]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-25) but some [Abbasid](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Abbasid&action=edit&redlink=1) caliphs, including [Harun al-Rashid](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Harun_al-Rashid&action=edit&redlink=1) and [al-Mutawakkil al-'Abbasi](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Al-Mutawakkil_al-%27Abbasi&action=edit&redlink=1), repeatedly destroyed the shrine. In order to destroy all traces of the mausoleum and prevent people from visiting the place, al-Mutawakkil ordered that the land be plowed and submerged with water.[[26]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-26) On the contrary, during the periods of [Al Buyah](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Al_Buyah&action=edit&redlink=1), [Jalayiris](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Jalayiris&action=edit&redlink=1), [Safavids](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Safavids) and [Qajars](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Qajars&action=edit&redlink=1), the al-Ha'ir was extensively developed, reconstructed and decorated.[[27]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-27)

In recent years, the most significant destruction of the shrine took place in [1216](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=1216&action=edit&redlink=1)/1801-2 by the [Wahhabi](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Wahhabi&action=edit&redlink=1) attacks to [Karbala](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Karbala). In this attack, many people were killed and the shrine was remarkably destroyed and its property was stolen.[[28]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-28) [Muhammad Samawi](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Muhammad_Samawi&action=edit&redlink=1) (d. [1371](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=1371&action=edit&redlink=1)/1951-2) wrote a poem to depict these destruction in his *Majali l-lutf bi-'ard al-taff*.

Moreover, in 1991, [Saddam Hussein](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Saddam_Hussein&action=edit&redlink=1) asked general Qays Hamza 'Abud to attack all visitors of the shrines of Imam al-Husayn (a) and Abu l-Fadl al-'Abbas (a) and to execute all people who were arrested by security forces. Hussein Kamil, Saddam Hussein's son in law, attacked the two shrines with a tank belonging to the special guard of the president, and shot the dome of Imam al-Husayn's (a) shrine. He then informed Saddam of his attack, and was praised by Saddam.

**Residence of Shiites**

The emphasis made by Shiite Imams (a) to respect the al-Ha'ir, on the one hand, and the relative freedom for the visit of the shrine during the period of [al-Muntasir al-'Abbasi](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Al-Muntasir_al-%27Abbasi&action=edit&redlink=1) ([247](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=247&action=edit&redlink=1)/861 - [248](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=248&action=edit&redlink=1)/862), on the other hand, led some ['Alawis](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=%27Alawis&action=edit&redlink=1) to live near the shrine. The first of these was [Ibrahim al-Mujab](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Ibrahim_al-Mujab), the son of Muhammad 'Abid and the grandson of [Imam al-Kazim (a)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Imam_al-Kazim_(a)). Ibrahim's mausoleum is located in the western porch of the shrine.[[29]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-29) His son, Muhammad al-Ha'iri, was the head of [Al Fa'iz](https://en.wikishia.net/index.php?title=Al_Fa%27iz&action=edit&redlink=1) sadat in Karbala, some of whom were the trusteeships of the shrine.[[30]](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Al-Ha%27ir_al-Husayni#cite_note-30)

**Notes**

* Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, under the word «حیر».
* Kilīddār, *Tārikh Karbalāʾ*, p. 26.
* Shahīd al-Awwal, *Dhikrā l-Shiʿa*, vol. 4, p. 291.
* Ṭihrānī, *Shifāʾ al-ṣudūr*, p. 294.
* Mudarris Bustānābādī, *Shahr-i Ḥusayn yā jilwagāh-i ʿishq*, p. 174-175.
* Ibn Qūlawayh, *Kāmil al-zīyarāt*, p. 254-255, 358-362.
* Karbāsī, *Tārīkh al-marāqid al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 259.
* Kilīddār, *Tārikh Karbalāʾ*, p. 71-72.
* Shahīd al-Thānī, *al-Rawḍa al-bahīyya*, vol. 1, p. 787-788; Ṭabāṭabāyī al-Yazdī, *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, vol. 2, p. 164.
* Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Wasāʾil al-Shīʿa*, vol. 8, p. 524, 527-528, 530-532.
* Ibn Qūlawayh, *Kāmil al-zīyarāt*, p. 456-458.
* Ṭūsī, *Tahdhīb al-aḥkam*, vol. 6, p. 81-82.
* Kilīddār, *Tārikh Karbalāʾ*, p. 51, 52, 58, 60.
* Ibn Saʿīd, *al-Jāmiʿ li-l-Sharāʾiʿ*, p. 93; Narāqī, *Mustanad al-Shīʿa fī aḥkām al-sharīʿa*, vol. 8, p. 313-317.
* Narāqī, *Mustanad al-Shīʿa fī aḥkām al-sharīʿa*, vol. 8, p. 313-317; Baḥrānī, *al-Ḥadāʾiq al-nāḍira*, vol. 11, p. 462.
* Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 126; Ḥillī, *al-Sarāʾir*, vol. 1, p. 342.
* Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 86, p. 89-90.
* Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 86, p. 89; Khomeini, *Taḥrīr al-wasīla*, vol. 1, p. 233.
* Ṭabāṭabāyī al-Yazdī, *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, vol. 2, p. 164-165; Narāqī, *Mustanad al-Shīʿa fī aḥkām al-sharīʿa*, vol. 8, p. 419-420, 425-426.
* Karbāsī, *Tārīkh al-marāqid al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 245-250.
* Ibn Qūlawayh, *Kāmil al-zīyarāt*, p. 420.
* Karbāsī, *Tārīkh al-marāqid al-Ḥusayn*, vol. 1, p. 255-259.
* Ṭuʿma, *Tārīkh marqad al-Ḥusayn wa l-ʿAbbās*, p. 87-93.
* Ibn Qūlawayh, *Kāmil al-zīyarāt*, p. 203-206, 242-245.
* Ṭuʿma, *Tārīkh marqad al-Ḥusayn wa l-ʿAbbās*, p. 73.
* Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 325-329.
* Kilīddār, *Tārikh Karbalāʾ*, p. 171-173.
* Longrigg, *Four centuries of modern Iraq*, p. 217.
* Ṭuʿma, *Tārīkh marqad al-Ḥusayn wa l-ʿAbbās*, p. 147-148.

1. Ibn ʿInaba, *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib*, p. 263-266.

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