Chapter III

Shrines of Iran

I. Shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani
II. Shrine of Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh
1. Shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani
Fig. 1: Shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani

Fig. 2: Fence (Zarih) of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani
Historical Migration of Syed and Descendants of Imams in Iran

Syed's and descendants of Imams are buried in large numbers in different parts of Iran. These descendants migrated to Iran during the reign of Ummaides and Abbasids Caliphs. Some of these migrants belong to post formatible period and number of migration took place after the formatible migration of Hazrat Imam Reza who was contemporary to Mamoon the 7th Abbasids Caliph. The reason behind such migration was that Syed and descendants of Imam found Iran a safer place against the atrocities of these Caliphs.¹ They felt more independent and free in Iran. In Iran they successfully established their reputation and several followers associated themselves to them and gradually these followers and descendants constructed and turned their grave into shrine in order to pay tribute to the saint.²

Two important shrines from the view point of people and government viz. shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani in Ray (Tehran) and the shrine of Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh in the North of Tehran are visited by pilgrims at large numbers.

Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani

Hazrat Abdul-Azim Hasani is famous as Syed-ul-Karim³ and he is also known as Abul Qasim. He is son of Abdullah, son of Ali, son of Zaid, son of Hasan, son of Ali, son of Abu Talib. His family root reach Imam Hasan through four intermediates and reach Imam Ali finally
with five intermediates. His maternal ancestor is Hashemi, she is Lobabeh, of Bani Hashem, and daughter of Abdullah, son of Abbas, son of Abdul Mutalib.  

Hazrat Abdul Azim was born in Madina in the year 789 (173 A.H.). He visited Imam Reza, Imam Mohammad Taqi, and Imam Hadi, and thereafter narrated many of their tales and narrations (hadith) to his friends and followers since he was one of the grand children of Imam Hasan Mujtaba.

He was a learned scholar and excellent narrator, he was also very popular, respectful and outstanding person, completely aware of Quran, its precepts and religious affairs. Much adoration about him is seen in the works of the Islamic scholars. They acknowledge him as a pious, virtuous, great and eminent narrator, with inner serenity.

Migration of Hazrat Abdul Azim: The reasons behind migration from Madina to Ray and living in a foreign land against the political and social conditions of that age was situational. Abbasid Caliphs were harsh against Imams. Among them the worst behavior was of Motevakkel Abbasi, he had severe hostility against the saint hence the shrine was completely destroyed for several times during his governorship, and he did not let the believers to do pilgrimage at the shrine.

Likewise Hazrat Abdul Azim was not safe from Caliphs rancor and enmity. They decided to kill him several times, used false
propaganda to disgrace him and make their harsh treatments legal. In this adverse and difficult time, Hazrat Abdul Azim visited Imam Hadi and expressed his religious belief to him.⁶

Imam Hadi confirmed his religious belief and considered him as one of his friends. When the caliph got the news of Hazrat Abdul Azim's meeting with Imam Hadi in Samera, he ordered officers to prosecute and arrest the former. Hence the saint disguised himself and went to different cities as a stranger. Imam Hadi selected him as a representative in Ray for conveying legal and religious affairs. The reason of this selection was based on the social and religious conditions of that age. He worked covertly for the propagation of Islam. Consequently people in different cities of Iran converge to Islam. Since then Ray became one of the important centres and residence of Muslims. Furthermore, Ray's specific geographical conditions as a blessed and productive region gave it undue importance.

Hazrat Abdul Azim came to Ray as a stranger and stayed in a locality of Muslim's in Sarebanan district at Sacatulmavali alley. He rarely left home. During the day he fasted and at night he worshiped God.

Many people got to know the presence of Hazrat Abdul Azim, and visited him and followed his narrations and scientific knowledge. He answered social, religious queries and religious jurisprudence eagerly. People considered his words as of Imam Hadi's.
Hazrat Abdul Azim was ill in the last days of his life, on one of those days he saw a dream which predicted future events. A noble Muslim dreamed Prophet Mohammad saying “one of my blood kin will die in Sacatulumavali war tomorrow, Muslims will attend the funeral, and will be buried in Abdul Jabbar’s garden near apple tree”. Therefore the noble muslim bought the garden in order to confer the honour of burying one of Mohammad’s kin. Since Abdul Jabbar had dreamed the same dream, he understood the heavenly secret of these two dreams, so he gifted the garden for Hazrat Abdul Azim’s grave in order to share the honour.

Hazrat Abdul Azim died on the same day, Shawwal 15th, 252 A.H. People expressed their grief. When his followers were giving bath to him ceremonially, they found a paper in his pocket on which he had written his pedigree as following:

I am Abul Qasim, son of Abdullah, son of Ali, son of Zaid, son of Hasan, son of Ali, son of Abu Talib.7

Hazrat Abdul Azim was highly respected by the contemporary imams and saints, and had a special popularity. Firstly because of his humanity, and secondly of his religious and scientific rank hence many narrators and scientists have mentioned him as a great scientist. For example, Saheb, son of Ibad, a great Islamic scholar of fourth century writes about the saint’s ethical, and scientific personality “he was a pious and virtuous person, and was famous for his truth and honesty.” He was aware of religious affairs, he believed
in justice and unification of God strongly and delivered many religious narrations. Ahmad, son of Khalid Barqii, author of "Mohasen", a religious book introduced Hazrat Abdul Azim as a high ranking narrator and writes about him. His virtue and honesty in conveying the religious points is reliable and satisfactory. A noted scholar, Nasabeh Syed Jaffar Arassi Najafi Husaini writes: Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani is a great Syed, pious, virtuous who has innumerable ethical virtues.

**Works of Hazrat Abdul Azim:** Hazrat Abdul Azim received knowledge from three Imams and learned eighty narrations and thereafter preached in different places. Besides these narrations he has writings attributed to him. One of the famous book is "Youm and Leileh" (day and night), its contents are the duties of being a Muslim and the precepts of day and night.

**History of the Shrine**

The first race arrived at Ray were Aryans who thereafter moved to Iran nearly in 1800 B.C. Ray is one of the oldest cities of Iran. It has been called as Ragha. This city was the capital in 150 B.C, and after the arrival of Islam in Ray the city was known as Shaikulbelad. Ray is located at the South of Tehran, and lies in one of its suburbs.

Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani was buried in Abdul Jabbar's garden, one of the Ray's residential area, many followers revived his memory, paid homage to him by constructing a sepulcher over the grave. Later a dome was built during the reign of Al-e-Booyeh, they propagated Islam and ruled over south and west of Iran and Iraq,
modified the construction and paid homage to the saint.

Ray was one of the important cultural, political and commercial centres during the reign of Al-e-Booyeh. Saheb, son of Ibad a famous poet, writer and scientist, whose ministry was in Ray, gave special attention to the importance of the shrine.

Some basic repairs was done on Hazrat Abdul Azim’s dome during the reign of Saljoghian. Initially the dome was made of bricks but in the reign of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar, it was ornamented with 13000 gold pieces. Its height is of 14 metres.

**Fence of the shrine:** The first wooden fence of Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine was placed on the grave during the reign of Shah Tahmasb Safavi. The fence prevented people to reach the grave. Later Fatah Ali Shah Quajar replaced it by silver. Thereafter some basic changes were made during the reign of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar some verses of Quran and poems were written on it. It was modified in 1942 and 472 kg of silver was used. A wooden box is placed near the grave which has historical significance. It has Quranic verses and narrations written on its four respective sides. Khwaja Najmuddin Mohammad, one of the minister gifted this box in 1324.

This box is 2.58 metres long, 1.5 metres wide and 1.20 metres high. Its pillars and different parts are made of precious walnut and lute.
Physical Description of the Shrine

The porches of the shrine: Since two offsprings of Imam Zadeh are buried near Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine, it has various porches ornamented with mirror, tiles and patch work. Pilgrims use these porches for praying, reading holy books, meditating and resting. Religious leaders also use these porches to deliver sermons on the martyrs of Karbela. Pilgrims listen these sermons attentively. These porches are also suitable for different prayers, such as: Komail, Nodbeh and Ashura. Especially in Moharram and Ramadan these prayers have much glory and benefit.

Eastern porch: This porch was built during the reign of Shah Tahmasb Safavi in 1537, in which shrine's main door was placed. Windows a memoir of the previous reign are still there. When north porch was built its entrance was changed into a mosque and ladies porch, but now it is again used for exit and enter.

Southern porch: There is a porch in the South of the shrine which connects the shrine to Imam Zadeh Hamzeh. There is an alley between these two shrines in the original building, probably the shrines were connected to each other by a porch during the reign of Safavieh.

Northern porch: This porch is located between Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine and north porch. Now it is the entrance door of the shrine. It is centrally separated by an iron wall for the entry of men and women,
men enter from the right, and women enter from the left side. The exact date of construction is unknown, and there is no evidence and document about it.

**Western porch:** There is a big porch in the Western part of the shrine, through which pilgrims enter to the shrine of Imam Zadeh Hamzeh. Having been added the grave of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar to this part, it has become important. It is decorated with mirrors, and is specifically used for the entry and exit of men, and now it is a place for collective prayer. The basic construction of this porch was done during the reign of Quajari, but it was decorated after Islamic revolution in 1979.

**North porch and its minarets:** This porch was built by Mirza Agha Khan Noori, the famous chancellor during the reign of Quajari. It was decorated by mirrors beautifully. It is of 12.5 metres high from the level of courtyard. Shoes are kept on two respective places. The right one is for men and the left one for women. There are two splendid minarets 16.5 metres height, decorated with tiles, in two sides of the north porch. These two minarets were built during the reign of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar. It is now used by a muezzin for calling people to prayer.

**The courtyards of the shrine:** Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine has three courtyards viz.:

**The big courtyard:** This courtyard is located at the north part of shrine
and is a place for the entrance and exit of pilgrims. It was built during the reign of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar. It is surrounded to the North by a market, to the South by Abdul Azim's shrine, and to the West by the longitudinal garden and western courtyard.

The courtyard of longitudinal garden: This courtyard comprises a school for religious scholars and presently it is closed. The nobles and aristocrats are buried in this courtyard by paying money to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine (100 million Rials/US$ 11100 for each grave). Selling land for the burial of the dead is good source of income.

Western courtyard: This courtyard is located in the western part of the shrine. It is bounded to the North by the longitudinal garden, to the West by newly built religious school and to the East by sacred places. As it has grave of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar hence it was called as Nasiri courtyard, but now it is known as Ayatullah Kashani.

Mosque: This mosque is located in the North part of the courtyard. The exact date of the construction is unknown, but it was repaired in 1818. It has two floors, the lower floor is used during winter, and the upper floor for summer. The daily prayers are performed in congregation and mourning ceremonies are held in the month of Moharram.

Library: Hazrat Abdul Azim's library was established during the reign of Shah Tahmasb Safavi. It has been rendering services since one hundred years to people who are interested in reading books. At
present there are about 40000 volumes of books and periodical publications in Persian, Arabic, English, French, German, and Russian languages. The subjects include: holy Quran, religious books, dictionaries, literature, biography, criticism, religious jurisprudence, narrations, mysticism, history, geography, travelogue, philosophy, logic, education, social sciences, linguistics, mathematics, astronomy, computer sciences, physics, mechanics, chemistry, medical sciences, natural sciences, arts, etc.

At present this library has 8600 members, it has important books and magazines, it has also two separate reading rooms for women and men. The whole library is computerized and provides better services to the members. The library functions from 8 AM to 8 PM daily and kept open on holidays (Fig. 3).

Museum: From the very beginning of the construction of the shrine some precious items were dedicated by people and governors. These items as well as belongings of saint are preserved in this museum. The oldest record about Hazrat Abdul Azim's museum was related to Shah Tahmasb Safavi.

One can see valuable and precious items in this museum. Its substructure is about 4049 m², there is also an iron door in the museum which belongs to the reign of Saljoghian. It is about 1000 years old, on which an inscription is written in Kufic script. Wood work was done in 1444, coincided with the reign of Shahrukh Teimoori,
Fig. 3: Library
precious manuscripts of Quran, some of which are more than 1000 years old, precious carpets, various tableaux of different ages of Iranian reigns are main content of the museum attracting people by large.

Clinic: Shrine's clinic was built in 1983 to provide medical and general services to the poor and pilgrims. Presently this clinic is working with the substructure of 2665 m$^2$. It has specialized departments such as: ophthalmology, radiotherapy, surgery, medicine, urology, orthopaedics, pediatrics, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynaecology, radiodiagnosis, dentistry, pathology, vaccination rooms and drugstores are the essential parts of the clinic. This clinic comprises of twenty six doctors and fifteen specialists, nurses and office personnel.

The services for students, orphans and the poor are free and general concession is given to other people with respect to their financial status. During the year more than 120000 patients visited the clinic (Fig. 4).

Faculty of narration sciences (Hadith): The whole expense of this faculty is met by the shrine. This faculty began its activity as a non-profitable organization, with a formal licence of sublime council of cultural revolution in 2000 to educate narrators, researchers and linguists.

The substructure of this faculty is 20000 m$^2$. It functions educationally and scientifically with twenty three classrooms, two
meeting halls, computer centre, English laboratories, specialized library with the capacity of 250000 volume of books, reading rooms and astronomy centre.

At present there are 250 students enrolled (male and female) who are studying in B.A and M.A classes. There are twenty teaching staff who are serving in this faculty. Hostels (separate for male and female), food, entertainment, health care are also provided and no money is charged from the students (Fig. 5).

**Borhanieh school:** It is one of the oldest Islamic school which is still working, its exact date of construction is unknown, but works and evidences betrays that it was repaired during the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Quajar. The management of this school is under the supervision of Abdul Azim’s shrine, about 110 students (male and female) study in this school. Ethics, philosophy, Arabic conversation, calligraphy and Persian literature are taught in this school. Education is free, other facilities including hostel, food and health care expenses are borne by shrine and religious authorities.

**Hozeh Elmieh school:** This Islamic school was built near Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine after Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979. Students are trained for Islamic teaching, criticism of Quran, history and foreign languages. This school has enrolled 305 students (male and female) and has twenty six experienced teachers. Education is free. The charges of hostels, food, health care and entertainment are met by the
Fig. 4: Clinic

Fig. 5: Faculty of narration sciences (Hadith)
Quran learning centre: This centre has various levels of teaching Quran for students of different ages to memorize, by heart (Tajvid). Till now more than 40000 students have taken training from the centre.

Other activities of this centre: Meeting for familiarity with the various aspects of Quran, sponsoring and inviting people proficient in Quran and eulogist from various places and countries especially from Egypt and Malaysia.

Educational and cultural complex: Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine has specified 40000 m² of land to educate the poor and talented students. Students have to qualify a test for the admission in preschool, there are 233 students enrolled in school, and 248 students in guidance school of this complex with the best educational facilities, and experienced teachers. Education in this school is free and the expenses are met by the shrine.

Education office: This office was established to educate personnel and staff employees and their children. Different subjects taught are Islamic teaching, ethics, office affairs, English, specialized education and sociability with the pilgrims. There are some educational facility for the personnel’s children to spend their leisure time during the summer, such as critical study of Quran and its aspects, vocational courses such as shooting, calligraphy, drawing, tailoring, and sports such as football, volleyball and table tennis. In summer 2004, 165
students have received training in the above fields by experienced instructors (Fig. 6).

**Qarzulhasaneh Islamic bank:** It is in the Western courtyard of the shrine. This bank started functioning with six personnel in the year of 1979. It was initially supported by the shrine. This bank gives preference to the personnel and shopkeepers around the shrine. It also gives interest free loan to the people connected to the shrine.

**Meeting halls:** Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine has two nice and big halls, with substructure of 4624 m², with the capacity of accommodating 900 people. These two halls are called Shaikh Saddoq and Shaikh Kolaini. They are used for religious ceremonies, mournings and seminars. The expenses are met by the shrine.

**Shabistan (resting part of the shrine):** There are small rooms around the courtyards of the shrine, these rooms are meant for the pilgrims to take rest and spend their leisure time (Fig. 7).

**Darolziafeh (dining hall):** Food is cooked in this kitchen on different occasions such as Moharram, Fatimid, Ramadan (fasting month) and distributed among the poor and pilgrims. The expenses are met by the shrine. On ordinary days food is cooked in the kitchen for the personnel. The substructure of this dining hall is of 2941 m², with the capacity of accommodating 800 people (Fig. 8 & 9).

**Astronomy centre:** It is one of the most equipped educational and research centres for propagating religious sciences and reviving
Fig. 6: Children of office employees attending the class

Fig. 7: Pilgrims resting in Shabistan
Fig. 8: Darolziafeh (dining hall)

Fig. 9: Kitchen
astronomy and giving various scientific and educational knowledge to the needy youth in Ray. The substructure of the astronomy central building is of 250 m² and has two observatory, specialized libraries, photographic laboratory, calendar centre, computer centre and audio-visual lab. Students and research scholars of universities visit this centre every week. The expenses of this centre are met by Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine.

Graves near the shrine: There are many graves of scientists, politicians and religious personalities near the shrine. The most important one include the grave of Imam Zadeh Hamzeh, son of Imam Moosa Kazim. There is a famous anecdote that which tells Hazrat Abdul Azim use to visit a grave every day and one said "this is the grave of one of the children of Imam Moosa Kazim".

The graves of Imam Zadeh Taher and Mutahar: Imam Zadeh Taher and his son Mutahar are buried in the Northeastern part of Abdul Azim's courtyard. Imam Zadeh Taher is pious and scientist and his family root reach Imam Zainul Abedeen with eight intermediates. Many pilgrims visit his grave.

The grave of Abul Fatah Razi: He is one of the famous scientist of Islamic world. His grave lies in the Eastern part of Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine. Several famous books are attributed to him such as Rouz-al-Janan in Tafsir-al-Quran and also a valuable interpretation of Quran in 13 volumes.
The grave of Abul Qasim Kalantari Tehran: He was an eminent scientist, a good researcher and an outstanding jurist. His important work is Taghrirat Dar Osoul. He died in 1878, and was buried near Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine.

There are so many graves of religious and political personalities and of poets near Abdul Azim's shrine, for example: the grave of Mohammad Husain Tonkaboni, one of the teachers of religious school, Shaikh Mohammad Ali Shah Abadi, a famous mystic and jurist, Syed Abul Qasim Kashani a religious leader who fought against colonization, Shaikh Zabiullah Mahallati a teacher of Islamic school and Nasiruddin Shah Quajar who was killed in Abdul Azim's shrine, Jeiran Sogoli wife of Nasiruddin Shah Quajar, Ali Reza Khan Quajar, regent during the reign of Quajar, Nima Youshij and Ghaani, famous poets of Iran are buried in Abdul Azim's shrine.

Organizations of the shrine: Research centre of Dar-ul-Hadith in Ghom: The centre of the scientific and cultural organization was established in the year of 1995, under the supervision of the officials of the shrine, to introduce, educate, and propagate the narrations of Prophet Mohammad. This organization is funded by the shrine. Duties of this centre include:

1. Research on subjects and sciences of narration, its aim is to defend and refine the narration.

2. Propagate knowledge and narrations.
3. Compile new narrative books.

4. Educate researcher in different narration sciences.

Till now more than seventy research papers have been published in the above areas. In this centre three publications of narration sciences, narration of life and heritage of narration is available.

**Specialized library of Islamic teaching:** This library is in Ghom and its whole expenditure is provided by Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine. This library has 25000 printed and stone impressions, 400 manuscripts, 800 photographic transcriptions, 150 narration thesis, and more than 100 publications with different titles. This library has 3000 members. It is open everyday except holidays.

**Dar-ul-Hadith publication centre:** This centre was established in 1996. This centre is a good source of income and it is used for the developmental and reconstructive affairs of the shrine. Till now more than 2000 books and Journals are published in this centre.

**Economical activities of the shrine:** Since there are no financial and governmental sources for the shrine, Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine began its economical activities in different fields to enhance its income and to implement developmental plans and to participate in social and economical development of the country. Following are the source of income of the shrine:

**Commercial part:** Till now this part has imported more than 800000
tons of primary material from industries, and it has exported products except petroleum.

**The manufacturing industrial part:** This part is responsible for manufacturing products for the spinning and weaving factory with the measurement of 52000 m². This factory produces 2500 tons of string and 6000000 m² of various stuffs every year.

**The establishment of agricultural part:** Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine has done great work for the exploitation of the agricultural endowed lands and husbandry affairs, some of them include: Cultivating 350 hectares of various crops, such as wheat, corn, vegetables. Cultivating 78800 pistachio tree at 196 hectares and cultivating saffron in 4 hectares.

**Other activities have been done in the field of gardening:** The garden has more than 500 tons of fresh fruit which are desirable for export.

**The reconstructive part:** 205516m² of land, 258007m² of building includes 1780 residential and office units and 1056 commercial units have been established by imitation of reconstructive company which is dependant on Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine. They are called Rezvan residential project, Javanmard Ghassab residential and commercial project, Soleimanieh residential project, Gholha residential and commercial project, and office and commercial project of Ray’s great market. Some of these suits are given to the shrine’s employees and to the poor on a lower price. Office and commercial projects are sold or rented to the applicants to be a source of income for the shrine.
**Endowments of the shrine:** The endowments are classified into two groups:

1. The endowments which were donated to the shrine from the time when Hazrat Abdul Azim was buried till the reign of Shah Tahmasb Safavi.

2. Those items which were added to the shrine during the reign of Shah Tahmasb Safavi, and after him.

The total number of endowed farms were sixteen, they were located around Ray, Shemiran, Shahryar the suburbs of Tehran, but gradually some of them were seized because of the political confusion and mismanagement of the shrine. Now only eight farms are there. They are Aliman, Alaeen, Dehkheer, Sink, Hosseneh, Khelzerir, Maftan, and Khoraeen. These farms have 2000 hectares of agricultural and gardening lands. Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine also has 500 commercial units and 6000 residential suits in different parts of Ray and Tehran. Two hundred shops in the main street of the shrine and Ray’s old market are among endowments of Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine.11

All tenants rent these gardens, farms, shops, residential and commercial units, and pay their rent to Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine monthly or yearly. In the year of 2003 the whole income of shrine’s endowments were 5800000000 Rials (US $644000) (Fig. 10).
Officials and Important Functionaries Related to the Shrine

They are divided into two groups:

1. Directly,  2. Indirectly

1. Directly: They rely on the shrine occupationally and financially and are considered as permanent employees of the shrine. They receive wages from the shrine every month.

2. Indirectly: These people are totally dependent on the resources by visiting pilgrims.

Those who rely on the shrine directly include:

Mutawallis: Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine is very large and comprises many organizations. Senior Mutawalli is selected by the leader of Islamic Republic of Iran. He has eight assistants, each is responsible for a specific part, and many persons work under the control of these Mutawallis. They include coordination and administrative assistant, office and financial assistant, economics assistant, international and public relations assistant, cultural assistant, sacred places assistant, therapeutic assistant, and reconstructive assistant.

These Mutawallis perform the following duties:

1. Checking offices, dealing day to day affairs, financial, welfare, health and therapeutic affairs, collecting money of the shrine’s fence, charity boxes, endowments, economical companies of the shrine, financial participations of the shrine in producing
agricultural as well as other products.

2. Checking the constructions of the buildings and sacred places, blacksmiths, installations, plumbers, carpentry, tailoring, gardening organizations etc.

3. Having coordination with working organization which are related to the shrine or with foreign organizations.

Khadims: Khadims of Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine are those persons who work in the porches of the shrine. They are 120 in numbers and are divided into male and female. Male Khadims work in male part and female Khadims work in female part. They work in three shifts from morning (after morning prayer) till 11 P.M. Their duties include cleaning the surroundings, guiding the pilgrims, answering their queries, and solving their difficulties mainly about distributing the charities. Sixty honorary members also work in the shrine for several hours and days without any honorarium.

Disciplinary officers: There are 90 disciplinary officers (men and women) in the shrine. They often do their duties in the courtyards and in front of the exit and entrance doors. They work in three shifts. They maintain discipline and prevent the crowd in specific part, guide pilgrims to the courtyards and different parts of the shrine, and explain them about rules of the shrine.

Ferashes (servants): There are 42 Ferashes in Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine who work in three shifts. Their duties include cleaning different
parts of the shrine, sweeping, washing, washing carpets, and covering different floors with carpets.

Shoe keepers: There are 46 shoe keepers in Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine, who work in three shifts, men shoe keepers keep men shoes and women shoe keepers keep women shoes, and give them a receipt. There are also several honorary members who work some hours or days in the shrine (Fig. 11).

Those who rely on the shrine indirectly include:

Roza Khans (preachers): They sit in the porches of the shrine every afternoon, especially on Thursday and Friday afternoons, because there are more pilgrims in the shrine on these days. Some pilgrims pay their debts to complete their needs as to solve their problems by giving money to a preacher and want him to elegize which is usually about Imam Husain's sufferings in Karbela. They arouse pilgrims emotions, and finally Roza Khans pray for pilgrims needs and their problems to be solved and vows to be accepted.

Eulogists: They elegize in various mourning ceremonies with sad and happy poems and eulogies. They are invited by Mutawallis and in return they receive money.

Dua Navees (writer of prayer): They sit in the markets, some pilgrims who have problems, approach to them, and they write prayer and pray on behalf of them. In return pilgrims give some money to them and get satisfaction.
Fig. 10: Endowment shops

Fig. 11: Shoe keeper
Markets: There are many small, big, new and old markets around Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine. These shops are functioning from the days of their ancestors. Before visiting the shrine, pilgrims go to these markets to purchase necessary items like veil, head dress (Rosary), prayer rug, candles, and charities and then visit the shrine. After returning from shrine they again visit these markets to purchase some gifts for their families and relatives as cookies, chocolates, sweets, Jewelleries, clothes, stuff, head dress, prayer rug etc (Fig. 12).

Vendors: There are many vendors in markets and allies around Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine. They sell some items to the pilgrims as sweets, chocolates, decorated items, artificial Jewelleries, candles, lute and perfumes. These vendors do not have a specific place, and move around the shrine area.

Beggars: Men, women and children beg in markets, and streets around the shrine. Some beggars are blind and paralytic, and show their faulty limb or hands to arouse pilgrim’s sympathy. Pilgrims give some money to them to increase the heavenly reward of their pilgrimage.

Another group which relies on the shrine indirectly: A number of other facilities are provided to pilgrims in form of restaurants, hotels, banks, offices, post office, telephone, taxi services and travel agencies.
Administration of the Shrine

Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine is controlled by twelve board of trustees, several religious and local reliable persons and a representative who is selected by the leader of Islamic Republic of Iran. He is called Mutawalli the head of board of trustees. He has eight assistants with specific duties, such as coordination and administrative assistant, office and financial assistant, economics assistant, international and public relations assistant, cultural assistant, sacred places assistant, therapeutic assistant and reconstructive assistant. For accomplishing the programmes, each assistant performs his own duties.

Among the mentioned assistants, whose one of the members of their family had been recently the shrine’s employee, have priority over others to be among the board of trustees and work in different parts of the shrine.

Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine is functioning independently and not under the control of any organization or ministry. It’s income is provided by collecting money of the shrine’s boxes, endowments and selling the graves in the courtyards of the shrine. Activities of commercial, agricultural, reconstructive and producing parts are also another sources of income, these incomes are spent on the affairs of the shrine in accordance to the decisions and controls of board of trustees.
Rituals and Ceremonies of the Shrine

Different rituals and ceremonies are performed by Khadims and Mutawallis they include:

Daily rituals: Khadims wear special clothes before Aazan (calling to prayer) everyday. They wait till the senior Khadim opens the main door, then they enter and after reciting Fatiha (praying for the dead) and reciting peace upon Prophet Mohammad and his family, they stand on their own place to perform their duties. After cleaning the items and belongings of the shrine, they maintain discipline and guide the pilgrims. Daily prayers are performed in mosque in which khadims and pilgrims participate (Fig. 13). After noon prayer, usually there are some rituals for the commemoration of the martyrs of Karbela (Imam Husain, his family and his followers). Pilgrims listen to the eulogists mournfully. Another ritual which is performed by Khadims is the lightening of lamps (cheragh).

It has been a tradition for hundred years in which some Khadims replace each other, and the senior Khadim recite some verses of Quran. All the pilgrims leave the shrine at 11 O’clock at night. Khadims close the doors respectfully and lastly, the senior Khadim closes the main door.

Weekly rituals: Ashura (the tenth day of Moharram) prayer: It is performed at 7 O’clock in the morning on every Monday, it is about the commemoration of Imam Husain and his followers in Karbela. Pilgrims
Fig. 12: Market

Fig. 13: Pilgrims offering prayer (Namaz)
recite it and then they are received warmly with bread, cheese, tea and dates.

**Komail prayer**: It is another prayer which is performed in Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine on every Thursday. Employees and pilgrims recite it. At the end of the ritual, people are offered tea, bread and dates.

**Nodbeh prayer**: It is performed in Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine in the morning every Friday. It is about the commemoration of Prophet Mohammad and his family. At the end of the ritual they are offered bread and dates.

**Friday prayer**: This prayer is performed in Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine on every Friday noon, in which pilgrims, Khadims, employees, and Ray’s residents participate, and listen to the sermons (orations) of Imam.

There are also some rituals on Friday afternoon every week in which many pilgrims participate to recite Quran and to pray for the dead (Fatiha), many outstanding native and foreign scholars (Qari) of Quran are invited to this ritual.

**Monthly rituals**: On the last day of every solar month (Maha-Shamsi) Khadims clean or perform dusting ritual (*ghobar rubi*) at Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine in front of board of trustees. At first they collect the shrine’s money and put them in special bags. Then they clean the items of the shrine’s fence such as grave’s box, mirrors, lamps, flower pots, Quran, then they wash the shrine’s fence with rose water, at the
end of the ritual, khadims count money in front of the board of trustees and deposit them in the account of Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine.

Recitation of Quran, praising for Prophet Mohammad and Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Abdul Azim and another rituals are performed at the beginning of every lunar month, in which Khadims, employees and pilgrims participate. If a person has a vow, he will distribute his charities among the poor and pilgrims at the end of the ritual.

**Yearly rituals:** The birthday anniversary of Hazrat Abdul Azim falls on the fourth day of Rabi-us-Sani. Khadims and Mutawallis arrange festive ceremonies. The whole courtyards and porches of the shrine are decorated with green stuffs, coloured ribbons, flowers, and lights. Eulogist read some poems and eulogies about Prophet Mohammad and Hazrat Abdul Azim's personality. Pilgrims participate in this ceremony, and they are offered sweets, syrup (sharbat) and cookies.

**Hazrat Abdul Azim's death anniversary:** It falls on 15th Shawwal. Khadims cover the whole courtyards and porches of the shrine with dark ribbons as a symbol of lamentation. Pilgrims and employees elegize and preachers sing some poems about Hazrat Abdul Azim's personality and his deeds, and also pray for Prophet Mohammad.

**Birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammad:** All parts of the shrine are decorated with green stuffs, coloured ribbons, flowers, and lights during this day, festive ceremony is arranged, in which eulogists and poets recite some eulogies about Prophet Mohammad, and people
pray (recite peace upon Prophet Mohammad). Khadims and employees of the shrine receive the pilgrims and others warmly. Syrup and cookies is distributed at the end of the ceremony. People kiss and congratulate each other after leaving the ceremony.

**Prophet Mohammad's death anniversary**: Various parts of the shrine are covered with dark stuffs during this day. Khadims and employees wear dark clothes as a symbol of mourning, and participate in mourning parties, listen to eulogies, and pray for Prophet Mohammad.

**Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha**: Eid-ul-Fitr is the festival at the end of fasting month Ramadan and Eid-ul-Azha is a day of sacrifice. The whole shrine is decorated with lights in these two great Islamic eves. Pilgrims wear new and clean clothes and perform Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha prayers only on these two days respectively. Pilgrims and others meet warmly, they kiss and congratulate each other after the prayers. They offer syrup, cookies and sweets.

**Eid-ul-Qadeer Khum (a festival in the memory of Hazrat Ali)**: The whole shrine is decorated with lights, and eulogists recite some eulogies on this happy day. People are received warmly with syrup, sweets and cookies on this auspicious day.

**Moharram and Safar months**: Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine is covered with dark stuffs during these months. Pilgrims especially male and different parties come to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine from Ray, Tehran, and near villages to participate in *majlis* from the beginning till
the tenth of Moharram, especially on Tasua and Ashura (the ninth and tenth day of Moharram), they mourn and elegize. Mourning meetings about the martyrdom of Imam Husain is held. The food is distributed during day and night among poor and pilgrims. During these days, if a person has a vow, he will distribute charities among the pilgrims. The above mentioned rituals are also performed on Arbaeen (40 days after the martyrdom of Imam Husain, his family and his followers).

Ramadan (fasting month): Ramadan is a month in which God gifted Quran to Muslims. Muslims read Quran each day during the month and finish the whole Quran within the month. During the month Sahri\textsuperscript{12} and Aftar\textsuperscript{13} are arranged for poor and pilgrims.

There are also some mourning ceremonies for the death of Imams. Khadims and Mutawallis cover the whole parts of Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine with black cloth, and they wear black clothes as a sign of mourning, and people console each other.

Rituals Performed by the Pilgrims at the Shrine

Pilgrims of different age, sex and social status approximately 30000 come to Abdul Azim's shrine on Thursday, Friday and holidays and ceremonial days. On other days approximately 20000 come for pilgrimage to shrine daily. Majority of them are from lower and middle classes. Pilgrims of various countries such as India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon, visit the shrine (Fig. 14).
At first pilgrims recite prayers with the intention to enter the shrine, they wear clean clothes, and respect the shrine humbly when they see the shrine’s dome and minarets from a far distance. Ladies cover themselves with a veil to enter the shrine. If they do not have a veil, they borrow it from the Khadims, otherwise they will not be allowed to enter the shrine. Pilgrims recite some prayers at the courtyards of the shrine. They give their shoes to the shoe keeper in front of the main door. They kiss the entrance door and the fence of the shrine, and thereafter recite some verses of Quran and pray for Prophet Mohammad.

All pilgrims turn around half part of the shrine’s fence and pay their debts by dedicating some money to the shrine (Fig. 15). Some times this money is given in form of aid. Some pilgrims perform pilgrimage or vow prayer, they sit in different porches of the shrine and recite Suras of Quran, like Sura-e-Yaseen, Sura-e-Mulk, Ayat Al Kursi, Char Qul, Wa An Yakad and Ganj-ul-Arsh prayer and pray for the fulfillment of their needs. Some pilgrims perform their daily prayers collectively, a group of them sit silently in different porches and corners of the shrine and meditate about their problems, ethical and spiritual affairs. Others resort to shrine for praying, tying threads, and lock on the fence of the shrine.

Pilgrims *nazar* in different ways to get their needs fulfilled for example they put some money to the holes of shrine’s fence or put some money in the boxes of the shrine. They may also dedicate some
Fig. 14: Foreign pilgrims

Fig. 15: Pilgrims at the fence (Zarih)
items as carpet, chandelier, veil, wall clock, gold, curtain, salt, lamps, fruits and cooked food.

Pilgrims also distribute their charities (*nazar*) among pilgrims in different courtyards of the shrine. The items like socks, shirts, veils, cookies, dried fruits, Halwa, Kachi, pottage, chocolates, syrup, breads, cheese, fruits and salts etc (Fig. 16).

These charities are distributed on Thursday and in the afternoon on Friday as people believe that the spirit of the dead is free in these two days and comes to this world to visit their relatives and secondly because Thursday and Friday are holidays and people have more time to visit such places. People believe that it is best method for distribution of goods to reach needy and some believe that since these charities are distributed in the shrine, so they are sacred for pilgrims.

Some pilgrims were interviewed in order to gather information about the purpose of their visit to the shrine.

Mohammad Salehi a visitor from Tehran told “my old mother has been ill for several months. Medical cure was not effective, so I have come to this place to visit Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine and seek blessings from him to cure my mother and comfort her.”

Ibrahim Eskandarzadeh with his family have come to this place from Arak, he said “I am married since thirteen years, and have many children. All these years I have been tenant and changed my house
Fig. 16: A pilgrim distributing Nazar
more than ten times. I draw a meager salary, my dream is to own a personal house."

Mahmood Allah yari from Ray said "I was unemployed for several months, I found a job in a company, thereafter I got married and now I have a child. The company in which I was working went bankrupt and I lost my job. I am ashamed of my family. I have been coming to this shrine on every Thursday and Fridays since the last one month and I have vowed a little money for finding a job, because I heard that Hazrat Abdul Azim is generous and who visits the particular shrine, his desires and needs are fulfilled."

Hasan Abdullah and his family from Iraq had come to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine. He said "we have been here for 20 days firstly for the sake of the pilgrimage and secondly relatives and countrymen in Iraq are going through adversities. Our country has been invaded by the foreign forces. In some parts of the country, there is a civil war. We have come here to pray for the restoration of peace and harmony of our country."

Raana Barati from Tehran said "I have two sons, they are above 30 years of age, and they do not wish to marry and waste their time unnecessarily. I have come to this shrine and distributed some cookies among pilgrims and wanted Hazrat Abdul Azim to solve my problem to make my sons agreed for marriage. My financial condition is good and I have promised after fulfilling my desire. I will visit again
to provide necessary goods for the shrine.”

Kobra jalali with her daughter had come to the shrine, from Shiraz she said “my daughter had been married for two years and has a child. Presently her relationship with her husband is not good. Now she is living with us without her child, thus we have come to this shrine to pray for the restoration of prosperity and return of past happiness.”

Narges Ehsanee with her husband had come to the shrine from Karaj, she said “we have come to this shrine for the sake of pilgrimage and also to pray for having a child. We have been married since four years, and have a happy life, but our desire is to have a child for a better life. I had two abortions. According to doctors I will be able to conceive a child by medical treatments, so we expect that our hope will be fulfilled with the wishes of Hazrat”.

At the end of this part we should add that in besides pilgrimage (the most important reason of pilgrims coming to Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine), paying their debts to the shrine, telling their difficulties to Hazrat Abdul Azim, pilgrims also go on pilgrimage to the tombs of Imam Zadeh Hamzeh, Imam Zadeh Taher and Mutahar, near Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine, and the graves of other distinguished personalities who are resting in peace near Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine, we spend some time and pray for them.

At the end of the pilgrimage, pilgrims leave Hazrat Abdul Azim’s
shrine comfortably because of doing a good religious deed, and they hope to visit again to the shrine after completing their wishes.

**Miracles Pertaining to the Shrine**

Some famous miracles attributed to the shrine are:

1. Hadi khan an employee of Tehran railway fell into a fit of an epilepsy. his body became motionless as a loath of meat and blistered completely. His illness lasted for several months and there was no hope for his survival. He requested his families to take him to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine. They took him to the shrine. They prayed the whole night, then he slept and dreamed Hazrat Abdul Azim, who asked him to leave the shrine and visit again on Friday night. He left the shrine and came back on Friday night, again the family members prayed the whole night, Hadi Khan again dreamed Hazrat Abdul Azim in which he saw him requesting Prophet Mohammad to cure Hadi Khan, Prophet Mohammad asked Hadi to stand up and said "you are physically fit". Hadi Khan woke up and found himself totally fit. Hence he arranged a grand party and illuminated the shrine for three consecutive nights.\(^{15}\)

2. Because of the carelessness of a driver, Mohammad, the consignment receipt of Aali Nasab factory's load was lost by a shop keeper in 1964. For this negligence driver's position was juripodised and this resulted into the loss of peace of mind. One of city fellow Haji Rajab, was so religious he usually visited to Hazrat
Abdul Azim’s shrine on foot on Friday. When he was informed about driver’s difficulty, he went to Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine on Thursday afternoon and prayed on his behalf. He stayed in the shrine on Thursday night and came back to Tehran on Friday afternoon and foretelled that the receipt will be found on Saturday, but he has to see shop keeper who was responsible for it. It was revealed that the shop keeper saw in the dream, to make more serious effort to find the receipt. He did so and was ultimately successful in tracing out the receipt. Discovery of receipt brought a relief to the driver through the blessings of Hazrat Abdul Azim.\(^\text{16}\)

3. Agha Meer was the Mutawalli of Hazrat Abdul Azim’s shrine at the end of Quajarieh reign. Asif-ul-Doulah was the governor of Tehran, and claimed that he should be Mutawalli, but Agha Meer rejected him, and said that legal governor is related to Mutawalli. They conflicted with each other. Finally Asif-ul-Doulah ordered his officers to arrest Agha Meer and send him to jail. Agha Meer participated in “burner lamp ritual” at Abdul Azim’s shrine. He put the first burner lamp on its specific place, but discontinued putting lamp thereafter. He asked Hazrat Abdul Azim to help him by saying “I am a Syed, I will not serve you unless you accept my request” Khadims wanted officers to wait till tomorrow morning. Officers came back next day to arrest Agha Meer, but two messengers came from Tehran and said “do not disturb that gentleman”.

Officers answered "it is Asif-ul-Doulah's order" messengers said "Asif-ul-Doulah died last night be cause of an ache in his abdomen". 17

4. An old expensive chandelier was dedicated to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine in 1976. It has been attracting people for many years. It was more than 60 million Rials (US $ 6666) at that time. It was interesting that it had been dedicated by an Armenian Christian who had certain problems and was not able to solve it, so he was disappointed. On 21st Ramadan when he was going to Isfahan, he saw many people going to a specific direction towards the dome from a far distance, and said "I do not know the owner of this dome but he must be a generous person as many people are going towards him. I want the owner of this dome to fulfill my need, and I vow to bring a gift for him." The Christian came back to Tehran two days later and visited many chandelier shops and bought one of the most desirable chandeliers to dedicate it to the shrine. He told the story to one of the Khadims and wanted him to go on pilgrimage to Hazrat Abdul Azim on his behalf after kissing him. 18

5. Late Allameh Bafghi was praying in a mosque behind Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine. There was an eulogy ritual in this mosque on one of the days of Moharram. A strange preacher who had come to Ray to elegize, wished for a pilgrimage to Hazrat Abdul Azim's shrine.
Since his cloak was torn, he was ashamed of preaching. He wanted Hazrat Abdul Azim to help him. When he reached the shrine, Allameh Bafghi was orating behind a tribune. He pointed the strange preacher to sit near the tribune, after the oration, Allameh Bafghi brought him to his house and gave him a cloak.

The preacher said "I did not want you to give me a cloak" and Allameh Bafghi replied "yes you wanted Hazrat Abdul Azim to give you a cloak".¹⁹
Notes and References


3. Karim (generous). Hazrat Abdul Azim, distributed his property among the poors. He was famous as Syed-ul-Karim.


10. Imam Zadeh Tahir and Mutahar.

12. Food eaten before morning prayers in the month of Ramadan.

13. Food eaten before evening prayers in the month of Ramadan.

14. After establishment of Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979 Abdul Azim's fence (zarih) was divided into two parts for men and women, so each group can turn around only half part of it.


18. Ibid. pp.50-51.

19. Ibid. pp.33-34.
II. Shrine of Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh
Fig.1: Shrine of Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh
Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh

In Bahr-ul-Ansab, a famous book by Hasan Moharrer Khoei, Friday Imam, has been mentioned as Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh one of the children of Imam Moosa Kazim. No record of his date of birth and death is available.¹

Against the harsh behaviour Caliphs of Bani Abbas Caliphs with Alaviyan, Imam Zadeh Saleh found refuge in Iran. He was killed by one of the Bani Abbas officers, called Hasan Nami Behbahani. He pursued Imam Zadeh Saleh from Karaj bridge, and finally arrested him in Jannat Golshan garden, under a great plane tree, near Sari spring, and killed him with a shovel, Imam Zadeh Saleh was buried near the same spring by his disciple.² This shrine of Imam Zadeh Saleh is located in the North part of Tehran at Tajrish.

History of the Shrine

The grave of Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh was usual till century 7-8 A.H. The first old and main building was built with courtyard, mosque, fence (Zarih) and dome with a measure of 3000m². It is one of the magnificent and glorious shrines of Iran.³

The main and primary building of the shrine is of a great and splendid square with thick walls. From the point of view of architecture it is similar to the buildings of Eilkhani reign with respect to the position of arches, and it was built in century 7-8 A.H. There is a silver and wooden fence in the middle and internal part of the shrine. This
wooden fence belongs to the reign of Nadir Shah Afshar, and the silver fence one to the endowments given by Mirza Saeed Khan, minister of the foreign affairs during the reign of Quajarleih. Clock of the shrine's fence belongs to Muayer-ul-Mamalek who endowed the clock by dedicating it to the shrine. The establishment of the current dome along with the subtle decorations and drawings and repairs of the shrine is attributed to Halakoo Mirza, famous as Bahadur Khan, son of Hasan Ali Mirza Shoja-ul-Saltaneh, the grand child of Fatah Ali Shah Quajar. This dome was built by Hasan Fadakar in the year of 1945. Expenses of repair and tile work of the shrine was met by him.

Physical Description of the Shrine

The porches of the shrine: There are some porches around the shrine of Imam Zadeh Saleh, the floor has been covered with carpet and marble stone beautifully the walls are decorated with marble stones, mirrors, and patch work splendidly. The ceiling has been ornamented with spectacular mirrors and expensive chandeliers. These porches are meant for the entry and exit of the pilgrims to the shrine from three respective sides (Northern and Southern porches are specifically for females and western porch for males). These porches are also suitable places for reading holy books, performing single as well as collective prayers, resting and meditating. Various prayers like Komail, Nodbeh and Ashura are also performed in these porches. Religious ceremonies and mourning ceremonies are also held in these
porches such as birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammad, Islamic eves Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, Eid-ul-Qadeer Khum, and the birth anniversary of other Imams. Mourning in the month of Moharram and Safar for the commemoration of Imam Husain and his followers and narrating their details of suffering. It is also held in Ramadan (fasting month) during three nights of Qadar (the night of descending Quran). Some pilgrims also vow to wish an eulogist to elegize in these porches. The exact date of construction of these porches is not traceable, but according to the manuscript written above the entrance porch in the North part of the shrine on which a poem has been written about Fatah Ali Shah Quajar, it also bears the name of Halakoo Mirza hence the repair and decoration works of these porches is attributed to Quajarieh reign.

The courtyard of the shrine: A very large courtyard has surrounded the shrine of Imam Zadeh Saleh like a belt. This courtyard is a place for entry and exit, resting and distributing the charities to pilgrims. It has also various parts, each one has a specific relevance. The parts are:

Mosque: This mosque lies in one of the agricultural fields of Jafar Abad Darbandh. It was endowed by Shoja-ul-Saltaneh (during the reign of Quajarieh). This mosque is used for daily prayers. It is also used for various prayers like Nodbeh, Komail, Ashura. Mourning ceremonies for the commemoration of Imam Husain in the month of Moharram and Safar is held. Quran is recited during three nights of
Qadar in Ramadan. There are also certain Islamic ceremonies like birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammad (Eid-Milad-un-Nabi) and twelve Imams.

Hammam (Turkish bath): This Hammam is located near the mosque, and lies in one of the agricultural fields of Jafar Abad Darbandh. It was endowed by Shoja-ul-Saltaneh and was dedicated to Imam Zadeh Saleh. Pilgrims and people of the region take bath in it. It is also called as Saleh bath, and it is under the supervision of the office of Imam Zadeh Saleh.

Office for the dedications and vows: This office is in the north part of the shrine’s courtyard. It receives pilgrim’s dedications and vows, either in the form of cash or goods on a receipt. The receipts in the form of bank checks are available for 1000, 2000, 5000, 10000, 20000, 50000, 100000 Rials\(^6\), on which the amount is written, if the dedication or vow is in the form of goods, its will be written on a receipt given to the pilgrim. The money which is received from pilgrims is spent for the development of the shrine and distributed among the poor and needy through charity institution.

Qarzulhasaneh Islamic Bank: This bank controls economical affairs of the personnel and shrine’s employees with a staff of five personnel. It gives them long-term, and interest free loans. The initial investment in the bank is done through the income of the shrine.
**Bookshop:** There is a big shop in the West part of the shrine's courtyard which sell different books of various fields of study. Such as religion, science, novels, others various publications, audio cassettes and CD's. The book shop is sponsored by the shrine, and its income is deposited to the account of shrine which is spent for the development of the shrine, poor, needy and charity institution (Fig. 2).

**Taxi stand:** Since pilgrims come to the shrine from far and near distances, hence taxi service is available for the comfort of the pilgrims. It is under the control of the shrine.

**Meeting hall:** There is a well equipped large meeting hall in the South part of the courtyard. Its has a capacity of accommodating 400 people at a time. Various religious ceremonies rituals and mournings and science congresses are organized by Khadims and Mutawallis of the shrine in this hall.

**Charity institution:** This institution provides financial assistance for purchasing house to poor, meets marriage expenses and medical expenses for those who are sick. At present this institution is awarding scholarship's to more than 200 poor and talented students who are studying in colleges and universities. If other mosques and shrines are in need of financial aid in order to help the poor and to hold various rituals and ceremonies, this institution provides financial help.

**Training institute:** This institute has been established to educate and train employees of the shrine in various fields of study such as Islamic
teaching, professional and occupational educations, and sociability with pilgrims. It also helps the local youths, employees and their children to spend their leisure time by getting engaged in calligraphy, handicrafts, reciting and commenting on the percepts of Quran.

In the summer of 2004, about 110 students were benefited in the different fields of study under the supervision of eight educators. The expenses were borne by the shrine.

Veil room: There are several veils in this room. Which is looked after by a manager who lends it to female pilgrims (those who do not possess) for entering the courtyard of the shrine.

Shops: There are six shops in the Eastern part of the shrine's courtyard, their entrance doors open to the mosque situated in the market of the shrine. Tenants of these shops deposit their monthly rent to the account of the shrine. The income is spent for the charity institutions (social services).

Rooms: There are two rooms in the Eastern part of the courtyard in which many religious, scientists and political personalities are buried.

Health centre: The building consists of two story. In 2001 it started with the staff of fifteen doctors, nurses and midwives and specialized doctors in different fields such as skin, dental, medicine, ophthalmology and pediatrics (Fig. 3).

This centre functions from 8 AM to 10 PM every day and offer medical treatments to the pilgrims and employees. Medical care and
Fig. 2: Bookshop

Fig. 3: Health centre
medicines are free for the poor. Fifty percent concession is given to out siders as well as employees of the shrine.

The whole expenses of the establishment of the above centre is provided by the shrine. Income of this centre is deposited to the account of shrine. It is important for the officials to know that if there is shortage of money for the medical treatments if so, some money of Imam Zadeh Saleh’s fence (Zarih) may be transferred to the centre.

Library: This library which is called Salehieh, was established in 2003. It has 27000 books belonging to different fields of study such as religion, philosophy, logic, literature, sociology, psychology, natural and medical sciences, arts, computer and agriculture. Various journals and publications are also present in the library (Fig. 4).

This library is a three story building. It consists of books, magazines, references, reading sections for women and men, separately. At present the library has enrolled 3100 members, and near about 170-200 members visit daily. Majority of them are university students. Librarian and staff members look after the affairs of the library from 8 AM to 5 PM daily.

Super market: It is called Saleh, it has been established for the comfort of the employees of the shrine but other people can also use it. All type of goods are available in the market. Comparatively the prices are 10-20 percent cheaper than of market’s. Income of this market is deposited to the account of shrine.
Dryer shop: The main work of this shop is washing and ironing Khadim's clothes, screens and veils of the ladies. This shop provides its services in a suitable environment with modern equipments. Poor people wash their clothes free of cost. While washing clothes of general people are charged minimum. The income is deposited in the account of shrine.

Kitchen: The kitchen of Imam Zadeh Saleh is a place for cooking food for various ceremonies and mourning rituals, such as Moharram, Safar, Ramadan (fasting month), and on other days on the request of pilgrims for distribution among the poor (Fig. 5).

Graves: According to the list provided by Imam Zadeh Saleh’s board of trustees, about 270 people are buried around the shrine’s courtyard, most of them are related to the last of Quajarieh reign and beginning of the first Pahlavi reigns. The names of distinguished personalities buried are:

Princess Hajieh Saheb Khanom daughter of Abbas Mirza, who was regent of Fatah Ali Shah Quajar, Mirza Nasrullah Khan Naeeni, Moshir-ul-Doulah chancellor of constitutional government, Mirza Nasrullah Khan Naeeni’s wife who was called Ghods-ul-Doulah, daughter of Haji Mirza Gholi Khan Ziba Khanom Ghods-ul-Doulah’s mother, who was buried near her daughter, Moayed-ul-Soltan Mirza Abdul Husain Khan who was Ghdos-ul-Doulah’s brother and his son,
Mirza Taqi Khan, Mirza Hasan Khan Moshir-ul-Doulah peer Nia son of Mirza Nasrullah Khan.

**Endowments of the shrine:** The measurement of the mausoleum and its courtyard is 3000 m$^2$ with the plague number 2640.

There is a mosque in the North part of the shrine with the measurement of 100 m$^2$. It is among the endowments of the shrine. Followings properties in Tajrish have been endowed to Imam Zadeh Saleh.

1. A coffee shop in the area of 25 m$^2$
2. A bath with in the area of 350 m$^2$
3. Twenty two shops with distinguished plague numbers (Fig. 6).
4. A garden in the area of 4000 m$^2$
5. A garden in the area of 3000 m$^2$
6. A garden in the area of 2500 m$^2$
7. A field in the area of 4000 m$^2$
8. A field in the area of 1700 m$^2$
9. A piece of land in the area of 4000 m$^2$
10. 1.5 shares of Doukian subterranean (for watering endowed gardens and fields).
11. 2.5 shares of Golab subterranean (for watering endowed gardens and fields).
12. Using Jafar Abad subterranean water 66 hours every week (for watering endowed gardens and fields).\(^7\)

The incomes of these endowments is more than 400000000 Rials (US $ 45000) for year. The whole income is deposited to the account of the shrine.

Officials and Important Functionaries Related to the Shrine

They are divided into two groups:

1. Directly
2. Indirectly

1. Directly: They rely on the shrine occupationally and financially and are considered as permanent employees of the shrine. They receive wages from the shrine every month.

2. Indirectly: These people are totally dependant on his resources by visiting pilgrims.

Those who rely on the shrine directly include:

Mutawallis: Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine has one administrative manager who is selected by the board of trustees. He is a senior Mutawalli (administrative manager) of the shrine. He delegates his power on the other Mutawallis who are assigned a specific job. These Mutawallis control administrative, financial, cultural and technical functions. The work of these Mutawallis is checked by a senior Mutawalli. Their duties are as following:

- To regulate the actions and decisions of board of trustees.
• To look after the financial position, welfare, insurance and health of the shrine's employees.

• To check the income of the shrine and their expenditure.

• To control the administrative and technical position and constructions and the maintenance of the buildings, electricity, water, gas, as well as cleaning the surroundings of the shrine.

• To control various ceremonies, programmes and mourning rituals held in the shrine and outside the shrine for better arrangement.

**Khadims:** There are 32 male and female Khadims in the shrine who work separately. Some male Khadims work for male, and some female Khadims work for female. They stand in the porches and the surroundings of the shrine and maintain discipline, guide the pilgrims and rest. They also clean the surroundings and items related to the shrine.

There are also 25 honorary Khadims (men and women) in the shrine who work some hours or days in the shrine without receiving any money, because of their vow and belief in the saint and the miracles of the shrine.

**Disciplinary officers:** There are 21 disciplinary officers (men and women) in the shrine, they stand in the surroundings of the courtyard, entrance and exit gates of the shrine. They maintain discipline in the courtyard of the shrine by controlling the crowd of pilgrims, guide them and explain about the cleanliness of the shrine.
Shoe keepers: There are 14 shoe keepers (men and women) in the shrine who work in two parts, shoe keepings is located in front of exit and entrance doors which leads to the porches. They keep pilgrim's shoes and give them a receipt. No money is charged (Fig. 7).

Ferashes (servants): There are 10 ferashes in the shrine who work in two shifts. They clean and wash different belongings of the shrine such as carpets, rugs etc. They finally cover the porches and courtyards with carpets at the time of various rituals.

Those who rely on the shrine indirectly include:

Roza Khawns (preachers): They recite sad and happy eulogies for mourning and to enhance sad and happy mood of the ritual. They sit in the porches around the shrine. Financial office issues them a license to preach. These Roza Khawns receive some money from a pilgrim who has a vow.

Eulogists: They are usually famous and are invited by Mutawallis. They receive their fee at the end of the rituals.

Dua Navees (writer of prayer): A large number of Dua Navees sit in the markets around the shrine. Usually women approach them. These Dua Navees have many prayer books, and write various Duas (prayer) on the paper such as, disputes between espouses, property disputes, childless women, cure for diseases, marriage etc. A person who wishes for a Dua, keep it as an advise by Dua Navees. They pay some money to the Dua Navees.
Fig. 6: Endowment shops

Fig. 7: Shoe keepers
Markets: There are many big and small markets around the shrine for meeting pilgrims and other people's requirements. Imam Zadeh Saleh’s market, is usually crowded and very famous. Its measurement is 2500 m^2. It was built during the reign of Quajarieh’s kings for religious rituals. During the month of Moharram and Safar this market is closed due to mourning on the death anniversary of Imam Husain. Shops around the shrine sell pilgrim’s requirements, such as: veil, prayer rug, candle, vowed items such as salt and wheat (for the doves of the shrine), cookies, dates, various types of jewelleries, clothes, food and head dresses (Rosary) etc. Pilgrims purchase these goods for themselves and for others. These shops also provide the necessary requirements of local people such as books, fruits, vegetables, bags, shoes, clothes and watches. Nice weather and pollution free region compels many high standard and well-off people to visit this place for purchasing different type of items (Fig. 8).

Vendors: There are many vendors in the markets and allies around the shrine, they sell different things as jewelleries, decorated items, salts, wheat, chocolates, cookies, candles, small prayer books, bags, shoes, and watches. Some of them have occupied a specific place in the market and others keep on changing their places. Since all shops around the shrine are crowded.

Beggars: There are many beggars in markets, streets, and allies around the shrine. Most of them are children and women, they recite some written poems to arouse pilgrim’s emotions. Beggars in this area
earn good money than those in other places, because of the shrine and rich people visiting the market.

Some service welfare centres and organizations are established around the shrine like coffee shops, restaurants, banks, travel agencies, and post office. These centres are providing services for the comfort of people.

**Administration of the Shrine**

The administration of Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine was given to Shemiranat charity institution on the approval of Islamic consultative assembly in 1984. The shrine’s board of trustees consist of six religious leaders including local and governmental trustees, one of them is selected as administrative manager by board of trustees and introduced to the charity institution. Administrative manager is considered as senior Mutawalli (having long experience). He is responsible for managing the administration of the shrine with five assistants. They include: administrative assistant, financial assistant, official assistant, cultural assistant and technical assistant. Each one possessing different offices and performing specific duties. The whole income of the shrine (vows and properties, endowments, charities, money and Jewellery given by pilgrims which is placed in lock boxes) is deposited into the account of Imam Zadeh Saleh shrine which is under the control of Shemiranat charity institution.
All incomes is maintained by Shemiranat charity institution, The expenditure is controlled by the financial office of the shrine.

Rituals and Ceremonies of the Shrine

Many rituals held in the shrine are controlled by Mutawallis such as daily, weekly, monthly and yearly rituals.

Daily rituals: Khadims wear special clothes before Aazan on (calling to prayer) every day. Senior Khadim opens the main door before morning prayer and pays reverence to Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh. Khadims stand on their respective places where their duties are assigned. After cleaning the items and surroundings of the shrine, they settle discipline and guide the pilgrims. Daily prayers are performed collectively every day in which Khadims, pilgrims and local people participate (Fig. 9). There are also several pilgrims standing in the porches of the shrine every morning and evening. Eulogists recite some eulogies to those who have different type of sufferings, and pilgrims listen to them. At the end, eulogists receive their fee and pray for the pilgrims.

These eulogies usually talk about Imam Husain, twelve Imams, Hazrat Fatima and Hazrat Abbas. Reciting Quran is another ritual held in the porches around the shrine every day. Proficient readers of Quran are invited. They recite holy Quran and explain important events to pilgrims with their sweet voice. Pilgrims listen very sincerely and carefully. Some pilgrims weep bitterly, particularly women. At the
Fig. 8: Market

Fig. 9: Pilgrims offering prayer (Namaz)
end tea, dates and cookies are offered. Doors of the shrine are closed at 10 PM on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and rest of the days Khadims close the doors at 11 PM, the senior Khadim locks the main door of the shrine.

**Weekly rituals:** One of the ritual ceremonial day only women participate to offer cloth. A big table is kept on Thursday from 9 AM to 11 AM. This big table is placed in the meeting room. Sweets, cookies, dates, fruits, dried fruits and tea are placed on it. These pilgrims eat and distribute charities among the poor and the pilgrims outside the meeting room and shrine. The expenses are borne by pilgrim’s charity.

Another weekly rituals held at the shrine are:

**Ashura prayer:** It is another ritual recited in the morning every Monday at 7 AM. It is about the commemoration of Imam Husain his family and his followers and their sufferings in Karbela. One eminent theologian delivers speech and prays for the pilgrims, who are listening and weeping during speech.

**Komail prayer:** It is a ritual which is held on every Thursday afternoon and it is a prayer for providing people’s needs. One eminent person recites and others listen.

**Nodbeh prayer:** It is another ritual recited on every Friday morning. It is about the commemoration of Prophet Mohammad and his family. One theologian recite it and others listen to him. Participants are received warmly. At the end tea, cookies, sweet and dates are offered.
**Friday prayer:** It is one of the prayer performed in the shrine in which pilgrims and people of the area participate. They perform Friday prayer after listening two orations of Friday Imam.

**Al-e-Yaseen:** It is also another ritual recited on Friday afternoon by an outstanding scholar of Quran. Pilgrims and others participate in this ritual, and at the end of the ritual they are offered tea, cookies, dates and sweets.

**Monthly rituals:** Cleaning or dusting ritual (*ghobar rubi*) of the shrine is performed at the last day of every solar month by the board of trustees. High-ranking personalities such as scientists, cultural people, government officers, managers, sportsmen, brilliant students of various universities are invited to this ritual. At first some verses and eulogies are recited, then nine persons are selected by the board of trustees, they wear white and rose-odorous dress, while praying, they enter the shrine’s fence (Zarih), collect the money and Jewelleries inside the fence and wash the whole items and surroundings of the shrine’s fence with rose water.

Pilgrims (especially women) sit in the porches around the shrine’s fence. They face the shrine and request Hazrat Imam Zadeh Saleh humbly to fulfill their needs.

After completing the said ritual, the shrine’s fence is closed, then the collected money is counted in the presence of the managers thereafter, it is given to the bank representative for depositing in the
account of the shrine. At the end tea, sweets and cookies are offered to pilgrims and guests.

Income accumulated during the first three months in the year of 2004 was 1866530000 Rials (US $207,400) as reported by the financial affairs.

Recitation of Quran is another ritual held in the beginning of every lunar month. Several outstanding scholars of Quran are invited. They recite some verses of Quran on the auspicious beginning of the month.

Many pilgrims participate in this ritual people distribute their charities among the poor and pilgrims around the courtyard of the shrine.

Yearly rituals: Birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammad: A glorious ceremony is held in Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine on this day. The whole shrine is decorated with green stuffs, coloured ribbons, lights, and flowers. Several eulogists are invited to this function to enhance the glory of the ritual with their happy eulogies. All pilgrims celebrate this auspicious day, congratulate each other and recite peace upon on Prophet Mohammad. Being a holy day, people prefer to distribute their charities among the poor and needy persons.

Many wedding ceremonies are also performed on this holy day. Several pilgrims who are financially sound, come to the charity institution of the shrine for helping the poor who are going to get
married. They also help some poor students who are studying in various universities they are benefited by the charity institution.

**Death anniversary of Prophet Mohammad:** The whole shrine especially its fence are covered with black stuffs during this day. The shrine's employees and pilgrims wear black dresses, recite Quran, prayer for Prophet Mohammad and participate in mourning rituals. Eulogist recite some eulogies and poems in the commemoration of Prophet Mohammad. At the end tea and dates are offered to the participants.

**Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha:** On the eves Eid-ul-Fitr (end of fasting month) and Eid-ul-Azha (feast of sacrifice) the whole surroundings of the shrine are decorated with flowers, lights and coloured stuffs. Many pilgrims visit to the shrine with new, clean, and scented clothes. Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha prayers are performed on these two eves in which many people participate. After the prayer they kiss and congratulate each other. Sweets, syrup, cookies are offered to the people.

**Eid-ul-Qadeer Khum:** The whole shrine is decorated on Eid-ul-Qadeer Khum, festive ceremonies are held in which a number of people participate. They are received warmly and offered sweets, cookies and syrup.

**Birth anniversary of Hazrat Zainab:** Festive rituals are held in the shrine on this day, eulogists recite some eulogies and poems in the
commemoration of Hazrat Zainab. Pilgrims and participants are received warmly and offered with sweets and cookies at the end of the ritual.

**Months of Moharram and Safar:** The whole shrine is covered with dark stuffs, mourning rituals are held during these months. Several eulogists are invited to the shrine every day to recite some eulogies and poems about the martyrdom and sufferings of Imam Husain, his family and his followers, to increase the sad mood of the ritual. Several mourning groups come to the shrine from different parts of the region to participate in the rituals especially of Ashura (tenth day of Moharram).

There are also several mourning rituals held on Arbaeen (40 days after the martyrdom of Imam Husain his family and his followers) in which many people participate. During all these days, food is cooked in the kitchen of the shrine for participants and the poor. The people whose requests are accepted with the blessings of Hazrat distribute their charities among the poor and pilgrims in the shrine.

**Ramadan (fasting month):** Recitation of Quran is done after every evening prayer in the shrine. One chapter (Sura) of Quran is recited on each day so that the whole of Quran is completed at the end of Ramadan. Everyday Sahri and Aftar is provided to the poor and pilgrims, during the month some food is also given to the poor families.
There are also other festive ceremonies for the birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatima and twelve Imams. Several eulogists recite eulogies and happy poems to enhance the happiness of the ritual. At the end participants in the shrine congratulate each other, tea, sweets, cookies and juices are offered. They distribute their vows and charities among the poor and needy pilgrims.

There are also some mourning rituals on the death anniversary of Imams. Several eulogists recite sad poems about the sufferings of Imams to increase the sad mood of the people. Participants console each other. They are offered tea and dates at the end of the ritual.

**Rituals Performed by the Pilgrims at the Shrine**

People of different ages (male and female) having different social status visit the shrine. It is very interesting that people belonging to middle and lower class visit in large numbers. People of various countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, India, visit the particular shrine (Fig. 10).

According to the manager of the shrine about 20000 pilgrims visit this place on Thursday, Friday, holidays and ceremonial days. While on other days the number is approximately 15000.

Pilgrims are usually conscious of their visit to the shrine. They wear clean clothes and respect the shrine with great humility. Ladies cover themselves with a veil to enter the shrine. If they do not have a
veil, they borrow it from the Khadims of the shrine and then return it after the pilgrimage.

After passing the shrine's courtyard, pilgrims go to the shoe rooms located in front of the entrance doors of the porches. They give their shoes to the shoe keeper and receive a receipt. After entering the porches they kiss the entrance doors and recite the prayer book of Imam Zadeh Saleh which is in fact permission for entering. They recite some Duas and turn around half part of the shrine's fence (Fig. 11). Some pilgrims hold the shrine's fence firmly, pray humbly and want Imam Zadeh Saleh to complete their needs, while others pray in front of the shrine’s fence for the health of their families and relatives. Some pilgrims pay their debts by dedicating money to the glass rack of the shrine’s fence, their intentions is to give some financial aid to the shrine. Some pilgrims may attach a lock, thread or piece of cloth to the shrine’s fence in order to develop their relation with the saint and another reason is that they may be suffering, they would open and untie these items if their needs are fulfilled by the blessing of Hazrat.

After completing the rituals of the shrine, pilgrims visit and rest in the porches and courtyard of the shrine (Fig. 12). Some pilgrims perform pilgrimage or vow prayer. If it is the time of daily prayer, they perform it collectively in the shrine. Some pilgrims recite Quranic Suras like Sura-e-Yaseen, Sura-e-Mulk, Aayat Al Kursi, Char Qul. Some pilgrims who have sufferings and difficulties approach to an eulogist
and ask him to elegize. Eulogist prays for the solution of their problems. Eulogies are related to Hazrat Abbas, and twelve Imams.

Some pilgrims sit in the corner of the porches and meditate about their needs, sufferings, saint of the shrine, spiritual and ethical problems. Others select this place in order to rest some hours far from madding crowd or material problems. Some pilgrims also chose this place to worship God for some hours. After doing rituals, pilgrims leave the surroundings and porches of the shrine. Some families sit in a part of the shrine's courtyard for some hours to rest and eat their food or distribute food among people as a vow. These various charities and *nazar* include: breads, cheese, sweets, dates, dried fruits, pistachio nuts, roasted peas, raisins, hazel nuts, almonds, and dried berry, pottage, Kachi, chocolates and cookies etc. Many people come to eat these charities, because they believe that these vows and charities are holy, some eat them because they are needy (Fig. 13).

Salt is the most famous vow distributed among people in the shrine. We can observe salt sellers outside the shrine's courtyard and salt distributors inside the courtyard in large number. Pilgrims believe that salt is the dowry of Hazrat Fatima and causes the blessing of life.

Some people who have a vow, distribute veils, dresses, socks, handkerchiefs, prayer rugs etc. among pilgrims in the shrine's courtyard. Generally poor people use these charities.

Number of these charities on Wednesdays are distributed more in comparison to other days, because people believe that the day
Fig. 12: Pilgrims resting in courtyard

Fig. 13: A pilgrim distributing Nazar
belongs to Imam Moosa Kazim, Imam Zadeh Saleh's father, so their vows and needs will be accepted and fulfilled, and their difficulties will be solved sooner on this holy day.

According to the office manager of dedication and vows dedicated money is deposited to the bank account of the shrine, some items like jewelleries, veils, screens, carpets, lamps, chandeliers, candles, various clothes, rice and wheat are used for the shrine and the rest is given to the charity institution (social services) for the distribution among poor and needy. Managers give receipts after receiving the goods and money from pilgrims.

Pilgrims come to the shrine because of various reasons. The main reason is of receiving heavenly reward. They have also some sufferings, and want Imam Zadeh Saleh to complete their needs, because they feel him as an intermediate between themselves and God. Some of the pilgrims including women, men, old and young ones were interviewed:

An old woman said "I have come to this place for the sake of the pilgrimage and another reason is that my son has been suffering from backache, a surgical operation is advised by doctors. He has four children. I have come here to pray and want Imam Zadeh Saleh to cure my son without any operation. I have vowed some cookies and distributed them among people and requested them to pray for my son".
Esmat Hasan Abadi from Tehran told "I have come here for the sake of pilgrimage. I also want Imam Zadeh Saleh to help us to have our own house, because we have been living as a tenant for several years and facing difficulties. If people pay their debts to my husband, we will be able to purchase a house."

Fariba Nami from Ahwaz said that "I have come to this place for the sake of pilgrimage. I want Imam Zadeh Saleh to help me for admission in medical course, I have been struggling since last three years continuously. One of my friend told me to visit the shrine and pray".

Khorsheed Husain from Pakistan said "I have faith on the saint as well as on different shrines hence I keep on visiting time to time, I have export import business. Now a days my business is not earning profit. So I want Imam Zadeh Saleh to help me to flourish my business".

Jamal Ibrahimi from Isfahan who had come for the sake of pilgrimage, said "I fell in love with one of my classmate girl and decided to marry, her parents rejected my proposal, because I was studying and unemployed. I had to wait till the completion of my education. Both of us are now graduate and I am currently employed, even then the proposal was rejected for the sake of their daughters education. I have come here to fulfill my wish as I am too depressed and cannot live without her".
Ali Ahmadi from Tehran said “my wife and I are not having good relations since of our marriage. There has been some misunderstanding between us. We have different taste and way of life. Our relatives tried a lot to convince her for reunion but it was in vain. Therefore I have come here to solve my problem by praying”.

Praying for the dead who are buried in the shrine is another ritual performed by pilgrims. While entering the shrine, pilgrims pay reverence to Imam Zadeh Saleh during their visit. They also talk and behave to each other politely in order to increase the heavenly reward of the pilgrimage.

At the end of the rituals pilgrims try to respect the whole items of the shrine and keep them safely, since they believe that these items are holy. Finally they bow and leave the shrine humbly with great satisfaction.

**Miracles Pertaining to the Shrine**

It seems that Imam Zadeh Saleh has many miracles with respect to the pilgrim’s belief and written sources. Pilgrims come to this place for the sake of the pilgrimage. They may also have some difficulties, and seek help from Imam Zadeh Saleh to complete their needs. It is a belief that people refer to the shrine only when there is no alternative and Imam Zadeh Saleh is the last hope for the solution of their problems, in fact he is an intermediate between them and God. The followings are some miracles of Imam Zadeh Saleh:
1. One of the pilgrims wrote in the registration book of miracles on March 14\textsuperscript{th} in 2003. "My son who is Ph.D. in agriculture had been suffering from an incurable disease since five years. Various medical treatments were of no use. He was admitted in Tehran, Mehr hospital on 1\textsuperscript{st} March and oxygen was given on March 9\textsuperscript{th} when he was put at I.C.U. I went on pilgrimage to Imam Zadeh Saleh, there I prayed for two hours for curing my son, then I returned to the hospital, and prayed the whole night, next morning doctors told that your son cured miraculously. Now my son is completely healthy and we have come here to thank Imam Zadeh Saleh".

2. A pilgrim wrote on January 27\textsuperscript{th} 2003. "My wife and I were traveling to Semnan two days ago, our car crashed on the road and my wife was thrown out of the car. Her brain, abdomen, and eyes were injured severely, I took her to Tehran Day hospital, doctors said that surgical operation is not possible and there are no chances of survival, but we are taking a risk. At the last hours of that night, I went to Imam Zadeh Saleh's shrine and prayed and vowed of slaughtering eight lambs and 1000 Kilos of rice. After returning from shrine doctors told me that surgical operation had been done successfully and my wife is out of danger. Now she is all right, so I have come here to pay my debt and thanks to Imam Zadeh Saleh".

3. An eighteen year-old girl who was born blind once dreamed that she had gone on pilgrimage to Imam Zadeh Saleh for curing her
eyes. Later she went to the Imam Zadeh Saleh's shrine with her family, aunt and uncle on Friday night. She prayed there and dreamed that Imam Zadeh Saleh has cured her eyes. Suddenly she woke and found her eyes healthy. She told the story to her family and pilgrims in the shrine, she and her family lost their consciousness. Khadims helped them, and after sometime they saw that a blind girl had cured miraculously. After many years Khadims can still trace the presence of the family in the shrine every Friday night.

4. A woman from Afghanistan who has been living in Iran since the last 15 years and has been visiting Imam Zadeh Saleh's shrine for many years. She told "we had a long-term dispute of property. It was very difficult to solve and every one failed. So I visited Imam Zadeh Saleh to solve my problem and attached one lock of the shrine fence and several on the back, suddenly the lock was opened, my daughter and one of the pilgrims near me understood this situation. All of us cried "it is a miracle." One of the Khadims called me Hazrat Zahra's servant and wanted to distribute some cookies among the pilgrims and also wanted an eulogist to elegize according to the advise of that Khadim, I wanted an eulogist to elegize. I followed her advice. When I returned home, I found that my problem was solved. Now we have been living happily so we have come to this place to thank Hazrat".
5. One person mentions in the registration book of Imam Zadeh Saleh
“one day I was coming back to Tehran after visiting a city, several
thieves stole my money as much as 50000000 Rials (US $ 5500).
There I vowed to find my money in 24 hours and dedicate 5000000
(US $ 550) Rials to Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine. Fortunately thieves
were arrested in less than 24 hours, and now I have come here to
pay my debt”.

6. A 29 year-old woman had written in the registration book of
miracles “I had diabetic problem, after a while it affected my eyes.
According to some doctors, my disease was acute which would
gradually attack on nervous system and paralyze the whole body.
One day I visited Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine, and requested him to
cure me. When I left, the aroma of jasmine had filled my clothes.
After medical examinations, doctors wondered that I was
miraculously cured”.

7. One of the woman Khadim Mrs Nasiri who had been working in the
shrine for many years, said “when I was young, I fell sick and was
confined to bed in a hospital, there I dreamed several people
wearing mask, they told me to put on my shoes and go on
pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam Zadeh Saleh. Suddenly I woke
and vowed to work all of my life at the shrine if I would be
miraculously cured. Eventually I was cured in the hospital and I
went to Imam Zadeh Saleh’s shrine to complete my vow. Officials
of the shrine did not allowed me to work, because I was too young.
Again I dreamed Imam Zadeh Saleh who wanted me to work in the shrine in spite of the refusal. Hence, I am working since 20 years in the shrine after being permitted by the officials”.

Another miracle of the shrine is attributed to on 18 years old girl who was dumb and motionless, she had come to the shrine with her mother to pray and when reached to his native place, she was completely healthy and normal.
Note and References


6. 9000 Rails is equal to one dollar.