

# Shrine of Prophet Jobe

## Do the Iraqis have the patience of Jobe?

> Report and photographs:  
Walid Abdul-Amir Alwan

The misfortunes experienced by the Iraqi people today and in the past, especially the consequences of the American occupation and collective assassinations, are unique. But the Iraqis faced their fate with great patience and amazing serenity. Perhaps this patience comes from that of the Prophet Jobe, following the misfortunes he endured in this country. He was buried in the centre of Iraq, in the area of Rarenjiya, close to the road which connects Hillah and Kufa. There is a large sign pointing to his shrine.

### History of the tomb

The tomb of Prophet Jobe is located 58 km from Hilla (Babylon), in the agricultural Rarenjiya area with a population of 5,000. The name of this area is connected to an event related to the British occupying army in July 1920, at the time of the major Iraqi revolution, known as "The Revolution of 20". The Battalion of Manchester", was massacred by local inhabitants when it camped on one of the farms.

Prophet Jobe is a descendent of Prophet Isaac Bin Abraham and his mother is the daughter of the Prophet Lott. He lived for 93 years between the 15th and 16th centuries BC.

This patient Prophet left Yemen and crossed Egypt before settling in Iraq, about 4 km south east of Hilla, in the area of Khliis, close to the river. He had been able to accumulate a large fortune which enabled him to acquire all the districts of the area. He married a very good woman who gave him intelligent children. His belief in God and his prayers increased with time, even when he went through hardships and misfortunes. He first lost his children, then his properties and was plagued by ill health for 40 years. But he became a symbol of patience. His wife remained at his side until he was finally cured.

The tomb is located in the centre of an

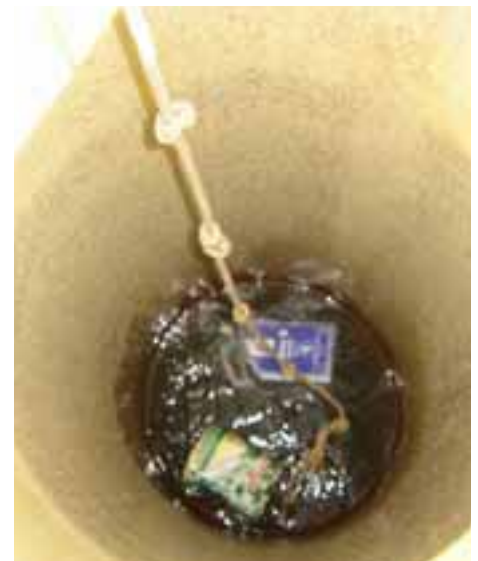
agricultural area, about 500m off the main road. Entering through the door of the shrine, called "Mercy Gate", one reaches an esplanade of 2500 m<sup>2</sup> which includes three rooms: one for the guard, a store and a library with copies of the Koran and prayer books. Not far, one finds a well-furnished guest room for holding ceremonies at the time of Ashura, as well as important meetings.

Before entering the mausoleum, there is a covered space of 4 x 16 square meters, with six columns, where one finds two signs on both sides of the door indicating how to approach the mausoleum and some information about Prophet Jobe's family tree. ▶



The shrine

المقام من الخارج



The well

البنير



Visitors

زائرات المرقد



المضيف الخاص بالمرقد حيث تقام فيه مجالس العزاء واجتماعات أهالي المنطقة

The hall used by the locals for their gatherings

In the surrounding area the brick mausoleum is about 192 m<sup>2</sup> and has a prayer room for men and women, separated by a curtain. Eight columns leading on to an arcade decorate this space. The dome overhangs the building and it is approximately 10 meters high with a diameter of 8 meters. It has 12 small windows in reference to the 12 Shia imams. The mausoleum is simple without the usual, elaborate decorations. Located in the centre, the tomb is covered with an iron grid and a green cloth. On the right side, there is a small padlocked door, through which the caretaker enters to collect the coins left by visitors. Outside the mausoleum is a well with a depth of only a meter and a half. The body of the Prophet Jobe was washed here after his death. Visitors drink this holy water and take some away in small bottles to offer to their close relations.

### The tomb of Prophet Jobe

The most important sites here are the "Wells of Cure": the first was used by Prophet Jobe for washing (Jobe's well) and the second for drinking water (Rahma well), named after Jobe's wife. The two wells are only four meters apart and do not exceed a depth of 2m.

The locals believe their water has a therapeutic effect. They drink some and give some to their relatives during winter. In summer, visitors soak their clothes in the soft, saline, water hoping for a cure.

The second tomb at the site is that of Rahma, daughter of Evraem, Ben Youssef (Joseph), Ben Yacoub, Ben Abraham; in other words she was the cousin of Prophet Jobe. This tomb is placed in the middle of an oval room and is surrounded by a wooden cage. There is a dome and a small minaret.

This mausoleum is located in the Al Khlis area of Al Qassem province. It has a



The well of Jobe

بئر النبي أيوب

beautiful, natural view, being close to Hilla River (a branch of the Euphrates), and is surrounded by a palm plantation. Prophet Jobe fell ill here and suffered for 40 years before his cure. It seems that the beauty of this area and its bewitching nature ameliorated his sufferings considerably and helped him to withstand his illness. ■



The shrine

المرقد من الخارج



The surrounding farming area

المنطقة القريبة زراعية