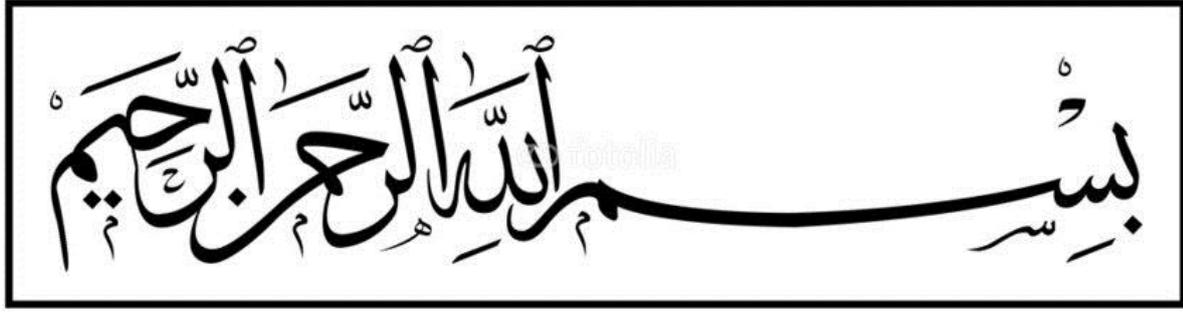


THE NIGHT OF DELIVERANCE

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THE NIGHT OF DELIVERANCE

All Praise is for Allah, the Creator of all, the Most Merciful and the Most Gracious. All Praise is to Allah, Who sent His Noble Apostle with the Truth, and guided us with it. All Praise is to Allah Who forgives the sins of His bondmen.

Infinite blessings and salutations of peace be upon Mohammed, Allah's Noble Apostle, and His beloved. And upon his noble progeny, his noble companions and those who rightly follow him until the Last day. Aameen.

On the night of 15th of Sha'baan (8th month of the Islamic Calendar), the majority of Muslims throng to the mosques to offer voluntary prayers (Nawafil), read the Holy Qur'an, ask Allah for His favours and to repent from sins.

This 15th Night of Sha'baan is often called "Laylat ul Baraah" or "The Night of Deliverance" for the narrations from the Holy Prophet clarify that a huge number of believers obtain salvation in this night, due to the infinite mercy of Allah Almighty.

Despite several sacred irrefutable evidences regarding the merits of observing this night in worship, the worship itself is unjustly labelled by newly founded factions as a "blameworthy innovation", and therefore an act that must be avoided. We have dedicated one chapter to answering the allegations and objections.

This article is a humble attempt to highlight the benefits of observance of this night, by following the orders of Allah Almighty and His Noble Apostle Hazrat Mohammed (Allah's blessings and peace be upon him).

This article is not an explanation regarding what is meant by 'innovation': readers may refer to other texts to obtain a better understanding of that.

This article is divided into the following sections:-

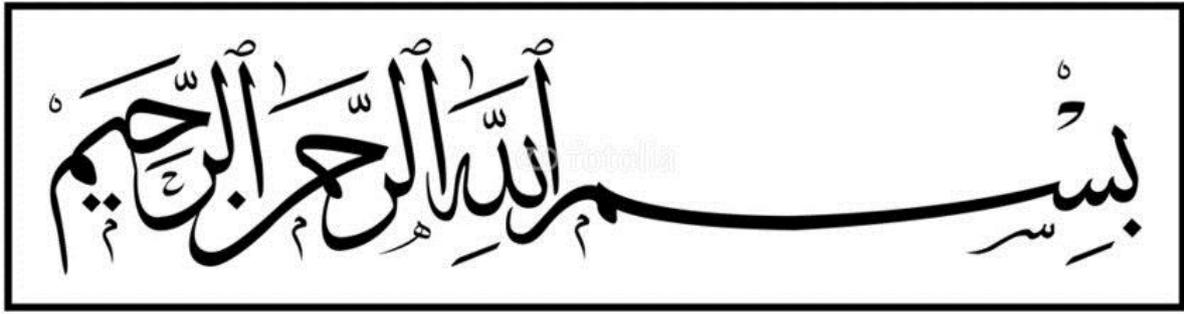
1. The importance of the month of Sha'baan, as per the Holy Quran and Hadeeth
2. The importance of the night of 15th Sha'baan- as per Holy Quran and Hadeeth
3. The importance of Supplication & the Seeking of Forgiveness.
4. The Methods of Observing this Night & the associated rewards.
5. Objections on observing 15th Sha'baan and their answers.
6. The evil of preventing people from virtue.
7. The Recommended Supplication on 15th Night of Sha'baan

May Allah accept this endeavour, for the sake of His beloved. Aameen!

All success is from Allah, and Allah the Supreme, knows best.

Aqib alQadri - May he be forgiven

12 Sha'baan 1436 (31 May 2015)



CHAPTER 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MONTH OF SHA'BAAN

To understand the importance of this night, we first present the importance of the ENTIRE MONTH OF SHA'BAAN, so that readers may understand that this it is indeed a special month, which demands that we increase our worship in any way, during its entire period.

Sha'baan Is A Special, Meritorious Month

Sha'baan precedes the month of Ramadaan, and is a harbinger of the great mercy that descends upon the believers during Ramadaan. It is a month where we need to "get ready" for the full month of fasting, extra Prayers at night (Taraweeh), increased recitation of the Holy Qur'an and training of the self (ego).

The Holy Prophet Mohammed ﷺ is reported to have said: "**Sha'baan is my month, Rajab is Allah's month and Ramadaan is the month of my Ummah. Sha'baan is an expiator, while Ramadaan is the purifier.**" (Khashf ulKhafa)

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was asked: "Oh Allah's Apostle, in which month other than Ramadaan is fasting the most meritorious?" Our Prophet answered "**Fasting performed in Sha'baan to show respect to Ramadaan**". (Tirmidhi)

Sha'baan is one of the meritorious months for which of Holy Prophet made special efforts and increased his worship. **This fact in itself proves that to increase worship on special occasions or special days of mercy from Allah, is not an innovation, but the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet.**

Allah Takes The Account Of His Creation, In The Month Of Sha'baan.

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was asked: "O Allah's Apostle! I never saw you fast in any other month as much as you did in Sha'baan.". Allah's Apostle stated: **This month is between Rajab and Ramadaan; People are ignorant of this month, which is between Rajab and Ramadaan. It is the month in which the deeds are presented to the Lord of the Creation. I want my deeds to be presented to Allah when I am fasting.** (Nasai)

Sayyidah Ayesah Siddiqah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "Prophet Muhammad used to fast the whole of Sha'ban. I said to him, 'O Allah's Apostle, is Sha'ban your favourite month for fasting?' He said, '**In this month Allah prescribes the list of the persons dying this year. Therefore, I like that my death be recorded when I am in a state of fasting.**'" (Abu Yu'la)

The Holy Prophet Used To Fast Most Of The Month In Sha`baan.

Sayyidah Ayesah Siddiqah said, "Never did the Allah's Apostle fast a complete month except for Ramadaan. And I have never seen him fasting more in any month than in Sha'baan." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Nasai Tirmidhi and others)

Narrated Sayyidah Ayesah Siddiqah: The month most liked by the Allah's Apostle for fasting was Sha'baan. He then joined it with Ramadaan. (Abu Dawud)

CHAPTER 2: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 15TH NIGHT OF SHA'BAAN

Allah Arranges The Affairs (Or Destinies) In This Night.

We have indeed sent it down in a blessed night - indeed it is We Who warn. During it are distributed all the works of wisdom. By a command from Us - indeed it is We Who send. (Surah Dukhan 44:3-5)

The majority of the commentators consider the “blessed night” in the above verses to refer to the Night of Power (or Decree) (*laylat alqadr*) which is in the month of Ramadaan: yet many also mention that this may be that of mid-Sha`ban. This view is based on the huge number of ahadeeth on the merits of the night of mid Sha`baan (15th night). This is also famously known as “Laylatul Baraa” or the “Night of Deliverance”.

The earliest of exegetists who agreed that it refers to the 15th night of Sha`baan are Imam Ikrimah and his group. Others such *Shaykh Ibrahim alHakki*, (in *TafsirRuh alBayān*), *Imam Alusi*, *Imam Nisaaburi* and *Imam Tabarani* opined that it refers to *Laylat ul Qadr*, but also mentioned the position of others that it could be *Laylat ul Baraa*.

Imam Ikrimah رضي الله عنه said regarding the above verse:- That is the night of mid-Sha`baan, when Allah the Supreme, arranges the affairs of the year. He transfers (some of) the living to the list of the dead, and records those who will make pilgrimage to the House of Allah, neither adding one additional nor leaving a single one of them out.

Sayyiduna Anas رضي الله عنه related that the Prophet said: “There are four whose nights are like their days and their days are like their nights; in them Allah confirms the oath and He frees the breaths and in them He gives in plenty: the Night of Power (*Laylat alQadr*) and its morning; the Night of `Arafat and its morning; the Night of mid-Sha`baan and its morning; the Night of Jumu`ah and its morning.(Daylami)

Allah Calls Out To His Creation To Seek From Him.

Since this night is one in which Allah decides the affairs, it is His great mercy that He calls out to His creation to seek from Him.

It is indeed a very special characteristic of this night that Allah calls out to His creation from the start of the night (immediately after sunset), and it lasts till dawn - whereas in other nights, it occurs in the last third of the night (before dawn).

When the mercy of Allah calls, only an unfortunate or an ingrate would turn his back!

Allah's Apostle said, "Our Lord, the Blessed, the Superior, comes every night down on the nearest Heaven to us when the last third of the night remains, saying: "Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?" (Bukhari, multiple chains)

Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurairah reported Allah's Apostle ﷺ as saying: **Allah waits till when one-third of the first part of the night is over; He descends to the lowest heaven and says: It there any supplicator of forgiveness? Is there any penitent? Is there any petitioner (for mercy and favour)? Is there any solicitor? (this carries on) until it is daybreak.** (Muslim)

It is reported from Sayyiduna Ali رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet said: “Let all of you spend **the night of mid-Sha’baan** in worship (i.e. partly) and its day in fasting. For verily in it, Allah (befitting His majesty) descends to the nearest heaven during this night, **beginning with sunset**, and says: Is there no one asking forgiveness that I may forgive them? Is there no one asking sustenance that I may grant them sustenance? Is there no one under trial that I may relieve them? Is there not such-and-such, is there not such-and-such, and so forth **until dawn** rises. (Abd alRazzaaq, Ibn Maajah).

Who among us is not in need of this special moment of forgiveness and mercy, when Allah Himself calls out to His creation to seek it from Him?

Narrated Abu Hurairah that Allah’s Apostle said ‘**Whoever does not supplicate to Allah, then Allah is angry with him.**’ (Bukhari in ‘Adab alMufraad’, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, alHakim, Ahmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Bayhaqi, Tabaraani.)

Allah Forgives A Huge Number Of Believers In This Night.

Sayyidah Ayesah Siddiqah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “I missed the Prophet one night so I went out to Baqi` (and found him there). He said: `Were you afraid that Allah Most High would wrong you and that His Prophet would wrong you?’ I said: `O Allah’s Apostle, I thought that you might have gone to visit one of your wives.’ He said: `**Allah the Supreme (befitting His Majesty) descends to the nearest heaven on the night of mid-Sha’baan and He forgives more people than the number of hairs on the hides of the sheep of the tribes of Kalb.**” (Ahmad, Ibn Mājah, and Tirmidhi)

Sayyidah Ayesah related that the Prophet said, “**When it is the night of mid-Sha’baan Allah looks upon His slaves, then He forgives those seeking forgiveness and sends His mercy to those imploring mercy and He leaves the resentful to their resentment as they are.**” (Tabarani, Bayhaqi)

Sayyidah Ayesah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Holy Prophet said, “O `Ayesah! Did you think that Allah and His Prophet would oppress you? Rather Jibrīl came to me and said, “**This is the Night of mid-Sha’baan. Allah frees in it a large number of the people from Fire, more than the number of hairs on the sheep of the tribe of Kalb. But He does not even look at an idolater or at a person who nourishes malice against someone in his heart, or at a person who cuts off the ties of kinship, or at a man who leaves his clothes extending beyond his ankles (as a sign of pride), or at a person who disobeys his parents, or at a person who has a habit of drinking wine.**” (Bayhaqi)

Commentators say that Bani Kalb was at that time a very large tribe and its members had large numbers of sheep. Therefore, the last sentence of this hadith and many others here indicates the big number of the people who are forgiven in this night by Allah Almighty.

Allah Forgives Everyone Except Certain Sinful People.

There are several reports testifying to this, which signify that Allah the Most Merciful forgives a huge number of believers, leaving out only some of the most wretched and those who continue in grave sins. (Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Ibn Mansur, Ibn Hibban, Tabarani, Bayhaqi, Ibn `Asakir, Ibn Zanjuwiyya, Darqutni and others)

Therefore the list mentions that Allah forgives all except the following types of persons:-

- a. Polytheists (all disbelievers).
- b. Those who bear malice in their hearts.
- c. Murderers
- d. Habitual drunkards
- e. Those who disobey and trouble their parents.
- f. A person who cuts off ties of kinship, etc.

Allah is the Most Merciful, and He forgives even the most wretched persons of all, if they turn to Him with true repentance. So it is expected from His infinite mercy that he forgives those who have lesser sins even if they just follow it up by committing virtue.

However, for injustices done towards others, a person must first seek pardon from them, and then expect forgiveness from Allah, for Allah is also the Most Just. Our elders have therefore recommended that one must seek pardon for any excesses that one may have done, from the ones caused harm, before the advent of this night.

How Did The Holy Prophet Observe This Night?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said **“Whoever fasts three days every month is as if he fasted all his life.”** (Muslim, Bukhari, various chains)

In another Hadeeth, the benefits of fasting for 3 days (especially for 3 “white days” in the middle of the month), are mentioned as follows:-

The Holy Prophet said **“Whoever fasts three days in a month, let him fast on the 13th, 14th, and the 15th days.”** (Nasai)

We have already mentioned that he used to fast almost the ENTIRE month of Sha’baan, for he believed that the deeds of the slaves are presented to Allah during this time and he wanted to be fasting when his deeds are presented; and he exhorted others to fast on the 13-14-15 of every month. Would he, as the most noble and the most exemplary leader, not be fasting on the same days of Sha’baan? Yes he did, as proven from several traditions, and we quote one here:-

Ibn Abbas reported: **It was the practice of the Allah’s Apostle to not omit fast on the ‘bright days’ whether he was staying at a place or on a journey.**(Nasa’i).

The narrations of Sayyidah Ayesah make it clear that the Holy Prophet stayed up during this night, and also visited the graveyard, and sought forgiveness from Allah, for his entire nation.

And the narration from Sayyiduna Ali رضي الله عنه makes it clear that the Holy Prophet exhorted others to increase their worship during this night, and to fast on the subsequent day. In fact, the following hadeeth makes it evident that the Holy Prophet considered this fast very important (although non-obligatory) – so much so that he told others to make it up if they had missed it.

Imran b. Husain reported Allah's Apostle having said to him or to someone else: Did you fast in the middle of Sha’baan? He said: No. Thereupon he (the Holy Prophet) said: **If you did not observe fast, then you should observe the fast for two days.** (Muslim)

Imran b. Husain reported that Allah's Apostle said to a person: Did you observe any fast in the middle of this month (Sha’baan)? He said: No. Thereupon the Allah’s Apostle said: **Fast for two days instead of (one fast) when you have completed (fasts of) Ramadaan.** (Muslim)

The Sacred Shariah Has Recommended Observance Of The 15th Night Of Sha'baan.

When all the above traditions are combined together (we have mentioned only a few), it becomes clear that this night has well-founded merits, and observing this night in worship as a sacred night is clearly beneficial.

Most of the traditions regarding the observance of the night are held as authentic by the majority of scholars. The minor defects in the chain of some narrations should not stop one from observance of the night in worship - because they have been narrated by a variety of narrators, they elevate the status of the narrations. And furthermore, even a weak narration is acceptable for establishing a merit. However, the merits of the month or the merits of the night itself are not disputed by any scholar. That is why the scholars of the Islamic nation have constantly been observing this night as a night of special merits and have been spending it in worship and prayers.

Therefore the Shariah recommends that additional (non-obligatory) worship be increased during this special night, by means of Zikr, recitation of Qur'an, Nawafil Prayers and to fast during the days preceding it and after it. It must also be noted that non-obligatory acts do not need 'permission' of anybody - rather they bring a slave closer to Allah, if he has not neglected the obligatory.

Narrated Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, who said that the Allah's Apostle ﷺ said: Allah – the Supreme said: **"My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory (voluntary) works so that I shall love him.** (Bukhari, part of a longer hadeeth)

Narrated Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, who said that the Allah's Apostle ﷺ said: Allah – the Supreme said: **The most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him.** (Muslim, part of a longer hadeeth)

Imam Suyuti says in his *Haqiqat al-sunnah wa al-bid'a*: As for the night of mid-Sha'ban, it has great merit and it is desirable (*mustahabb*) to spend part of it in additional worship.

Imam al-Ghazali wrote in his *Ihya* – During the Night of mid-Sha'baan, one should offer 100 Raka'ats, reciting in each *Raka'at* after Fateha, Surat Ikhlās 10 times.

Even Ibn Taymiyya considered the night of mid-Sha'ban "a night of superior merit" in his *Iqtida al-Siraat al-Mustaqim*.

CHAPTER 3: THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPLICATION & SEEKING FORGIVENESS

The importance of supplicating to Allah, and seeking his forgiveness just cannot be overstated. We are His slaves, and for every moment (every nanosecond or even less) we are totally dependent on His Mercy and infinite Grace. In fact our very existence is His gift, our continuity is His bounty.

I therefore list here, just a few reminders for the above in order that one may incline and seek out every opportunity to please His Lord, to seek all from Him.

Regarding Supplication

Allah, the Most Gracious says;-

And O dear Prophet, when My bondmen question you concerning Me, then surely I am close; I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he calls on Me, so they must obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may attain guidance. (Surah Baqarah 2:186)

And your Lord proclaimed, "Pray to Me, I will accept; indeed those who stay conceited towards worshipping Me, will enter hell in disgrace." (Surah Momin 40:60)

Numan bin Bashir رضي الله عنه reported: The Prophet said, "**Du'a (supplication) is worship.**" (Abu Dawud)

Narrated Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Allah's Apostle said '**Whoever does not supplicate to Allah, then Allah is angry with him.**' (Bukhari in 'Adab al-Mufrad', Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, Ahmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Bayhaqi, Tabaraani.)

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah reported: The Allah's Apostle said, "**A slave becomes nearest to his Lord when he is in prostration. So increase supplications while prostrating.**" (Muslim).

Sayyiduna Abu Umamah رضي الله عنه reported: The Allah's Apostle made many supplications which we did not memorize. We said to him: "**O Allah's Apostle! You have made many supplications of which we do not remember anything.**" He said, "Shall I tell you a comprehensive prayer? Say: (translated) "**O Allah, I beg to You the good which Your Prophet Muhammad begged of You; and I seek refuge in You from the evil where from Your Prophet Muhammad sought refuge. You are the One from Whom help is sought and Your is the responsibility to communicate (the truth). There is no power or strength except with Allah the Most High, the Great.**" (At-Tirmidhi)

Sayyiduna Abu Darda' رضي الله عنه reported: The Allah's Apostle said, "**The supplication of a Muslim for his (Muslim) brother in his absence will certainly be answered. Whenever he makes a supplication for good for his brother, the angel appointed for this particular task says: "Ameen! May it be for you, too'."** (Muslim).

Sayyiduna Ubadah bin As-Samit رضي الله عنه said: The Allah's Apostle said, "**Whenever a Muslim supplicates Allah, He accepts his supplication or averts any similar kind of trouble from him until he prays for something sinful or something that may break the ties of kinship.**" Upon this someone of the Companions said: "**Then we shall supplicate plenty.**" The Allah's Apostle said, "**Allah is more plentiful (in responding).**" (Tirmidhi).

Regarding Repentance & Seeking Forgiveness

Allah, the Supreme, says:

And those (the pious) who, when they commit an immoral act or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness of their sins – and who forgives sins except Allah? And those who do not purposely become stubborn regarding what they did.(Surah Aale Imran 3:135)

“And ask forgiveness from your Lord and incline towards Him in repentance (Surah Hud 11:3)

And O Muslims, all of you turn in repentance together towards Allah, in the hope of attaining success (Surah Noor 24:31)

O People who Believe! Incline towards Allah in a repentance that becomes a guidance for the future".(Surah Tahreem 66:8)

“The one who repents from sin is like one who did not sin.” (Ibn Majah, Tabarani & others)

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah reported: I heard Allah’s Apostle saying: ***"By Allah, I seek Allah's forgiveness and repent to Him more than seventy times a day."*** (Bukhari).

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah narrated: Allah’s Apostle said, ***"He who repents before the sun rises from the west, Allah will forgive him"***. (Muslim).

CHAPTER 4: THE METHODS OF OBSERVING THIS NIGHT & THE ASSOCIATED REWARDS.

We will stress here on the fact that since increased worship and remembrance of Allah during this Night of Deliverance is a non-obligatory, there are no strict rules of what sort of worship must be done. These are only recommendations by our illustrious scholars, so that we reap the maximum out of our sincere worship, and the maximum out of our sincere supplications. If any slave wishes to concentrate on any sort of worship, he can definitely do that; who are we to prevent from virtue?

So one may do as much of the following one likes, for all these are loved by Allah, the Supreme:-

1. Repent from sins and seek Allah's forgiveness.
2. Engage in Remembrance of Allah (Zikr)
3. Recite the Holy Qur'an
4. Send Salutations upon the Holy Prophet
5. Increase your knowledge by reading books of Tafseer etc.
6. Supplicate to Allah, seeking all the needs of this world and hereafter.
7. Offer the Maghrib, Isha and Fajr Obligatory Prayers with the congregation. This carries a very high reward, including spending the whole night in worship.
8. Attend the assembly of pious scholars, listen to their discourse, and try to gain some sacred beneficial knowledge. This too carries a very high reward, including spending the whole night in worship.
9. Offer the missed obligatory "Qada" Prayers, and resolve not to let them lapse again.
10. Offer Nawafil Prayers.
11. Offer additional charity to the needy, orphans and destitute.
12. Serve the parents.
13. Visit the Graveyard, especially graves of deceased parents.
14. Do Tawaaf of the Kaabah or any other virtuous acts, etc.
15. Stay away from play and frivolous pastimes.

We have already listed some narrations regarding how Allah brings His slaves closer to Him, when they have completed their obligations and then persevere in the Nawafil (non obligatory).

Before we list out the recommendations of our illustrious scholars regarding the mode of worships, we list here-below the virtues of such worship, so that we understand them and incline towards them.

Fasting

It is recommended to fast on 2 days i.e. on the day preceding this Night (14th) and the day after it (15th Sha'baan). It would be better to fast also on the 13th in accordance with other hadeeth narrations.

We have already mentioned the Sunnah of fasting during Sha'baan. Just two narrations are mentioned here, to highlight the merit of fasting itself.

Fasting is a shield with which a servant protects himself from the Fire (of hell)." (Ahmad)

For a fasting person there are two times of joy; a time when he breaks his fast and a time of joy when he meets his Lord. (Bukhari)

Seeking Allah's Forgiveness and Mercy

We have already mentioned the virtues of supplicating.

Visiting Graveyards

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: **"Visit the graves, for they remind you of the Hereafter."** (Muslim).

Visiting the graveyard carries immense reward and has multiple benefits:

1. The visitor remembers death and the dead: and that this worldly abode is only temporary.
2. The deceased benefits from the salutations and the supplications made by the visitor.
3. The visitor also benefits from the salutation given in return by the deceased and by their supplications.

Offering Supererogatory (Non Obligatory) Prayers.

"He who observes 2 Raka'ats with full devotion after performing ablution well, becomes entitled to enter paradise". (Muslim)

"Hazrat Baraida reported that the Prophet arose at dawn, called Bilal and said: **For what thing have you preceded me in Paradise? I did not enter Paradise but heard your sound of footsteps in front of mine. He said "O Allah's Apostle! I never proclaim the Azan except that I prayed 2 Raka'ats and no impurity affected me except that I made ablution at its advent: and I considered that is due from me 2 Raka'ats for Allah"** (Tirmizi).

Recitation of the Holy Qur'an especially Surah Yaseen

Sayyiduna Abu Umamah reported: I heard the Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) saying, **"Read the Qur'an, for it will come as an intercessor for its reciters on the Day of Resurrection."** (Muslim).

"Whoever recites Surah Yaseen at night seeking the pleasure of Allah, that night he will be forgiven." (Abu Nuaym)

"Everything has a heart and the heart of the Glorious Quran is Surah Yaseen. Whoever reads Surah Yaseen, Allah records for them a reward equal to that of reading the whole Quran 10 times." (Tirmidhi, Dhahabi)

Making Supplications

We have already mentioned the virtues of supplicating. We mention below the supplication of Sayyiduna Umar which he made during the Tawaaf, for it is part of the supplication recommended by scholars, in the glorious Night of Deliverance.

Abdullah bin Humaid and others relate that `Umar said, as he was going around the Sacred House, "O Allah, if You have written me as miserable, or sinful, then erase it and make it (written that I be) happy and forgiven, for You erase whatever You wish and you confirm (whatever You wish) and with You is the Mother of Books."

The full supplication of the 15th Night of Sha'baan, is mentioned in the Tafseer (exegesis) of Imam Alusi

Knowing the great virtues the above modes of worship carry, scholars have recommended the following be done on the 15th Night of Sha'baan. (One may do more as one wishes).

After Maghrib or Isha prayer (preferably with congregation), offer 6 Raka'ats (2 Raka'ats three times) of Nawafil prayer, for seeking Allah's good pleasure and with the following intentions

1st with the intention (and prayer) that Allah may grant a Long Life, with goodness. (This includes all the goodness in Life and the good end to life, i.e. dying whilst on proper faith).

2nd with the intention (and prayer) that Allah may Protect from All Calamities, Hardships & Misfortunes. (This includes protection from disbelief, sickness, magic spells, falling into sin or heresy).

3rd with the intention (and prayer) that Allah may not make one dependent on or indebted to anyone, except Him. (This includes disability, poverty, dishonour etc).

Readers will note that the above 3 Nawafil are like Salaat ul Haajat (Prayer for Fulfilment of Needs), and our luminaries have taught us to seek almost everything through these 3 Nawafil.

After each 2 Raka'ats, one should read Surah Yaseen once, for it carries enormous benefits.

After reciting Surah Yaseen, supplicate to Allah with the special supplication for the 15th Night of Sha'baan. The words of supplication are mentioned in the Tafseer of Imam Alusi, and incorporates the supplication of Sayyiduna Umar which he made whilst going around the holy Ka'aba. The supplication begins with the following words: "*Allahumma yaa Za alManne wa laa yamunnu alayhe*". *The full prayer wordings, in Arabic are at the end of the book.*

CHAPTER 5: OBJECTIONS ON OBSERVING 15TH SHA'BAAN AND THEIR ANSWERS

Objection # 1: Observing 15th Sha'baan is a blameworthy innovation (Bid'ah), as the Holy Prophet or the Sahaba did not observe it.

The Answer:

This is a blatant lie. The objectors are purposely hiding many Hadeeth, of which the most notable is as follows:-

It is reported from Sayyiduna Ali رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet said: “**Let all of you spend the night of mid-Sha'baan in worship (i.e. partly) and its day in fasting. For verily in it, Allah (befitting His majesty) descends to the nearest heaven during this night, beginning with sunset, and says: Is there no one asking forgiveness that I may forgive them? Is there no one asking sustenance that I may grant them sustenance? Is there no one under trial that I may relieve them? Is there not such-and-such, is there not such-and-such, and so forth until dawn rises.** (Abd alRazzaaq, Ibn Maajah).

It is not an innovation, but in fact it is a Sunnah to do so, for the Holy Prophet and the Sahaba observed it. We have already mentioned several narrations that the Holy Prophet himself ordered the Sahaba to observe the night in prayer, and the day in fasting. Only a blind heretic will have the audacity to reject or disregard the sacred authentic evidences given.

Objection # 2: The narrations regarding 15th Sha'baan are all weak or fabricated.

The Answer: Allahu Akbar! This is a false accusation. Most of the narrations regarding the merits of the 15th of Sha'abaan are authentic, reliable and verified by hadeeth scholars. None of them are “fabricated”.

The only narrations that are “weak” (due to weakness in chain of narrators), are those regarding the Holy Prophet's visit to the graveyard on that night. A weak (or Daeef) hadeeth does not mean that it is false or fabricated. Moreover, when weak narrations are repeatedly mentioned from multiple sources, they strengthen each other, corroborate each other and elevate the status of the subject matter. Furthermore, even a weak hadeeth can be accepted in matters of judging excellence or merit.

Objection # 3: Fixing a particular date for additional worship is a blameworthy innovation (Bid'ah) , as the Holy Prophet or Sahaba did not observe it.

The Answer: We have already proven the merits of Sha'baan, the merits of the “white” days (13-15), and the merits of the 15th of Sha'baan itself. So choosing 15th Sha'baan for additional worship is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet and his companions.

This objection is therefore incorrect. The Shariah fixes the times once a year for fasting (Ramadaan), the day of Hajj (09 ZilHajj), Friday for prayer in every week. The Holy Prophet also chose Sha'baan for maximum voluntary fasts, 3 fixed days a month (13, 14 & 15), every Monday and Thursday for fasting etc.

Objection # 4: Offering voluntary prayers and additional worship should not be limited to just one night, (such as 15th Sha'baan) - it should be done throughout the whole year.

The Answer: This means that the objector has accepted that the work is meritorious. If one wants to do it the whole year, no one is stopping him. In fact, it would be encouraged. But that does not mean offering it on 15th Sha'baan would become bad.

Objection # 5: All days and nights belong to Allah; there is no difference and we should not offer additional worship on certain days, which makes it an innovation.

The Answer: Surely, all days and nights do belong to Allah, the sole creator of everything. And Allah has himself kept more merit in certain days and nights, so that we may be attracted by the merit and rush towards Him, in the hope of salvation. Do you not see that Ramadaan, the first 10 days of ZilHajj, the Night of Arafah, the Night of Power – they all have higher merits than other days that all belong to Allah?

We have already answered this objection by proving the merit of 15 Sha’baan above other nights.

Objection # 6: Going to Graveyards is Haraam because people do merry making, light fireworks etc.

The Answer: Going to graveyards is a Sunnah and an act of virtue, as explained in the hadeeth, therefore the objection is incorrect. Merry making and lighting of fireworks should not be done, but stopping people from going to graveyards is like stopping people from doing virtue.

Objection # 7: Going to Graveyards on 15th Sha’baan is not a Sunnah, as the hadeeth about it is “weak”.

The Answer: The Shariah does not disallow one from visiting the graveyards on a particular day; one can go on any day one wants to.

A weak (or Da’eef) hadeeth does not mean that it is false or fabricated. Moreover, when weak narrations are repeatedly mentioned from multiple sources, they strengthen each other, corroborate each other and elevate the subject matter. Furthermore, even a weak hadeeth can be accepted in matters of judging excellence or merit.

Objection # 8: Offering the 6 Nawafil is not proven from Sunnah, therefore it is an innovation that is blameworthy.

The Answer: The sacred Shariah offers full permission for any additional prayers, unless they have been specifically forbidden (such as at time of sunrise etc). We therefore do not need to take permission from anyone to offer additional or voluntary prayers. Do you not see that Sayyiduna Bilal used to offer 2 rounds of voluntary prayers before every Azaan and 2 rounds of voluntary prayers with fresh ablution whenever he broke his ablution? And did not the Holy Prophet himself give him glad tidings for this?

And surely Allah loves those who strive in His way by way of additional worship, and is pleased with them! See what the Holy Qur’an mentions:-

Undoubtedly Safa and Marwah are among the symbols of Allah; so there is no sin on him, for whoever performs the Hajj (pilgrimage) of this House (of Allah) or the Umrah (lesser pilgrimage), to go back and forth between them; and whoever does good of his own accord, then (know that) indeed Allah is Most Appreciative (rewards virtue), the All Knowing. (Surah Baqarah 2:158)

We have already mentioned that one should strive in additional worship in any way he likes on this night, but following the recommendations of scholars is always more beneficial.

Objection # 9: The method of offering the 6 Nawafil is not proven from Sunnah, therefore it is an innovation that is blameworthy.

The Answer: As explained above, these are voluntary prayers, and no one deems them to be compulsory or obligatory. These are recommended by our great scholars, so that laymen may reap the maximum benefit from it and seek from Allah all goodness in this world and the hereafter. In fact many illustrious scholars such as Imam Ghazaali, Imam Aalusi and Imam Suyuti have recommended offering much more voluntary prayers. So one may offer it this way, or any other way one wishes. It is therefore not an innovation.

Objection # 10: It is better to offer obligatory missed prayers in this night rather than offering voluntary prayers, therefore offering the 6 Nawafil is not useful.

The Answer: Surely, obligatory prayers take precedence over the voluntary, and scholars emphasize that one must offer one's obligations first. However, this does not mean that one must stop people from offering voluntary prayers for this could be the starting point of a person's journey towards salvation, and becoming regular in his obligatory prayers.

And if a person is already regularly offering the obligatory, then the objection does not stand anymore! In fact, for such, the voluntary prayers are the means of getting yet closer to Allah, the Supreme. See the authentic narrations in this regard where Allah mentions that He loves His slaves who offer the obligatory and then come closer to Him through additional, voluntary worship.

Objection # 11: It is better to offer obligatory missed fasts of Ramadaan on the 13,14 & 15 of Sha'baan, rather than offering voluntary fasts, therefore offering voluntary fasts are not useful.

The Answer: Surely, the obligatory fasts take precedence over the voluntary, and scholars emphasize that one must offer one's obligations first. However, this does not mean that one must stop people from offering fasts – such a person should be advised to make Niyah for the missed obligatory fasts on these days.

And if a person does not have any obligatory missed fasts, then he should offer voluntary fasts on these meritorious days.

Objection # 12: The Supplication recited on the 15th of Sha'baan is not proven from Sunnah. It is therefore a blameworthy innovation.

The Answer: The sacred Shariah allows believers to supplicate to Allah in any way they wish, in any language they wish. This supplication, alHamdolillah, includes the one made by the great companion Ameer ul Momineen Sayyiduna Umar Farooq, and is also mentioned in the famous Tafseer of Imam Aalusi.

It is best to follow the advice of the scholars and we should be grateful that they compiled it for us, so that we may seek the best from Allah. Again, this is just recommended, and a person is free to make supplication in any words he wishes, so long as he does not seek evil.

Objection # 13: The voluntary prayers should be offered only at home, not in the mosque.

The Answer: The Holy Prophet used to offer Nawafil in the mosque as well as at home. So this objection is totally frivolous, and against the Sunnah.

Furthermore, this meritorious night begins with the Maghrib, and what could be better than staying in the mosque and continuing the worship, until the time of Isha comes, so that one may join the

congregation again? Moreover, supplicating in an assembly along with one's brothers is emphasized in the Sunnah.

Nevertheless, the Nawafil are not prayed as a congregation, and one is free to observe this night in worship, whether in the mosque or at home.

Objection # 14: The Hadeeth tells us that Allah ta'ala descends (befitting His majesty) every night, and looks towards His creation every night. So there is nothing special about the night 15th Sha'baan.

The Answer: We have already mentioned the words of the Holy Prophet wherein it is clear that this occurs on 15th night of Sha'baan beginning from sunset itself, whereas on other nights, it starts only in the last part of the night. So this night does have special significance. Here is the Hadeeth that proves that the in 15th Night of Sha'baan, the great mercy of Allah begins right from sunset:-

It is reported from Sayyiduna Ali رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet said: **"Let all of you spend the night of mid-Sha'baan in worship (i.e. partly) and its day in fasting. For verily in it, Allah (befitting His majesty) descends to the nearest heaven during this night, beginning with sunset, and says: Is there no one asking forgiveness that I may forgive them? Is there no one asking sustenance that I may grant them sustenance? Is there no one under trial that I may relieve them? Is there not such-and-such, is there not such-and-such, and so forth until dawn rises. (Abd alRazzaaq, Ibn Maajah).**

Objection # 15: In the Saheeh Hadeeth of Muslim Shareef it is mentioned that the destiny (being good or evil), deeds, life span and livelihood are recorded for the child whilst still in its mothers' womb. So it is incorrect to believe that this is the night when our fate, lifespan, and provisions are decreed.

The Answer: By presenting this hadeeth, the objectors are denying 4 major matters of faith:-

1. It is the belief of the Ahle-Sunnah that the human being is not entirely constrained nor is he totally free to do anything as he wishes. He has a certain level of freedom and choices, which affect the outcome, and in some areas he has absolutely no choice where he cannot change anything. Those sects who went to either extremes (such as denying destiny altogether done by the Qadariyyah or claiming that humans are totally free to do as they wish done by the Jabariyyah), are both heretical and deviant sects.
2. They are denying the clear verses of the Holy Qur'an. In Surah Dukhan, Allah the Supreme states that "During it are distributed all the works of wisdom." Furthermore, in Surah alQadr, Allah the Supreme states "The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months. In it descend the angels and Jibreel, by the command of their Lord – for all works".
3. They deny the command of Allah that we need to supplicate to Him; for if all things are indeed totally fixed, then what is the benefit of supplicating to Allah? Indeed, Allah commands us to beseech Him, and He indeed changes the destiny through prayer, good deeds and charity. For He states in Surah alBaqarah (2:186)] "And O dear Prophet, when My bondmen question you concerning Me, then surely I am close; I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he calls on Me, so they must obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may attain guidance."
4. They are also denying Allah's absolute power, for indeed Allah has the power over all things, and the power to change things: as He says in the Surah alRaad (13:39) "Allah erases and confirms whatever He wills; and only with Him is the real script."

So the meaning of this Hadeeth is that some things are absolutely fixed, and it also proves the absolute knowledge of Allah, the Supreme. It does not mean that (Allah forbid), that we do not need to

supplicate to Him. We also ask the objectors here "If your destiny is fixed, why do you supplicate to Allah?"

If they are right, does this mean that we stop praying to Allah, seeking anything from Him, because everything is already decreed and cannot change? This is against the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet. And what will such people say regarding the Night of the Decree (Laylat alQadr) which occurs in the last ten days of Ramadaan?

And your Lord proclaimed, "Pray to Me, I will accept; indeed those who stay conceited towards worshipping Me, will enter hell in disgrace." (Surah Momin 40:60)

Numan bin Bashir رضي الله عنه reported: The Prophet said, "**Du'a (supplication) is worship.**" (Abu Dawud)

Narrated Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Allah's Apostle said '**Whoever does not supplicate to Allah, then Allah is angry with him.**' (Bukhari in 'Adab al-Mufrad', Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, Ahmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Bayhaqi, Tabaraani.)

So do the objectors want people to stop worshipping Allah ta'ala, although Allah ta'ala wants us to supplicate to Him? And although supplication is indeed worship?

Objection # 16: Deeds are NOT shown to Allah on 15th Sha'baan. As per the authentic Hadeeth the deeds are shown on Mondays and Thursdays.

The Answer: This is another blatant lie; and they are denying the saying of the Holy Prophet:-

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was asked: "O Allah's Apostle! I never saw you fast in any other month as much as you did in Sha'baan.". Allah's Apostle stated: **This month is between Rajab and Ramadaan; People are ignorant of this month, which is between Rajab and Ramadaan. It is the month in which the deeds are presented to the Lord of the Creation. I want my deeds to be presented to Allah when I am fasting.** (Nasai)

We have proven from Hadeeth that deeds are indeed presented during Sha'baan. However this does not conflict with the deeds being presented to Allah the Supreme on Mondays, Thursdays or any other days. In fact, Allah is the All Aware, and He knows everything.

Objection # 17: People think that the souls of the departed ones come to their families homes on these nights, which has no basis in Qur'an and Hadeeth.

The Answer: There is ample evidence from Qur'an and Hadeeth to show that the souls of Muslims (except those of sinners being punished) are free and have the liberty to visit the earthly world. Even the books written by Ibn Jawzi and Ibn Taymiyyah have copied the same references of Qur'an and Hadeeth to prove that souls are free to roam in this world too. Nevertheless, whether someone's family members' souls visit his homes or not, it has nothing to do with the worship itself.

One cannot say do NOT worship Allah because the souls will or will not come. Our worship is for Allah: so if the souls visit the families homes or do not, does not affect our intention of worshipping Allah the Supreme.

Objection # 18: There is no Saheeh hadeeth concerning the night of the fifteenth of Sha'baan. So this night is ordinary like other nights and the reward for praying/worshiping in this night will be the same as other nights.

The Answer: We have already listed several hadeeth which expound the great benefit of seeking Allah's great mercy in this night.

We do not need a "Saheeh" hadeeth to practice Nawafil (additional worship); this new rule is a Bid'ah (evil innovation) being introduced by deviants that to practice even supererogatory deeds, you need a Hadeeth that is classed as "Saheeh". Islamic scholars have ruled that even a "Daeef" Hadeeth (i.e. with weak narrators) is acceptable to prove the excellence (Fadhail), and to practice good deeds. As mentioned earlier, when weak narrations are repeatedly mentioned from multiple sources, they strengthen each other, corroborate each other and elevate the status of the subject matter.

Furthermore, the leader of the same deviant sect, Hafiz Ibn Taymiyyah agreed on the excellence of this night, and performing additional worship during it.

Objection # 19: Fasting on 13th 14th 15th of every month is recommended and not only on 15th Sha'baan.

The Answer: The Hadeeth you quoted confirms the excellence of fasting on 15th of every month so it obviously applies to 15th of Sha'baan as well. There are Hadeeth narrations also for 15th Sha'baan separately: and the scholars of Ahle-Sunnah do not stop anyone from fasting for 3 days every month, other than Ramadaan (in which people must fast the entire month).

CHAPTER 6: THE EVIL OF PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM VIRTUE

We have established in the preceding chapters that observing 15th Sha'baan and spending its night in worship and the day in fasting, is indeed a Sunnah and a great virtue. So people must desist from calling this a "blameworthy" innovation, and not prevent people from the remembrance of Allah.

Allah the Supreme says:-

The devil only seeks to instil hatred and enmity between you with wine and gambling, and to prevent you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer; so have you desisted? (Surah Maidah 5:91)

Narrated Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, who said that the Allah's Apostle ﷺ said: Allah – the Supreme said: **"My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask (something) of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about (seizing) the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him."** (Bukhari)

Do those who prevent from the voluntary worship want people NOT to remember Allah, and therefore not gain His proximity? Is it not one of the most evil deeds? Indeed only the devil would want humankind not to be close to Allah, to be loved by Allah. And indeed it is the devil who is mankind's open enemy! So are not they, who prevent from worship, following the ways of the devil?

And who is more unjust than one who prevents the name of Allah being mentioned in the mosques, and strives for their ruin? It did not befit them to enter the mosques except in fear; for them is disgrace in this world, and a terrible punishment in the Hereafter. (Surah Baqarah 2:114)

So are they ready to face the terrible punishment for preventing the name of Allah being mentioned in the mosques?

O People who Believe, bow and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord, and do good deeds in the hope of attaining salvation. (Surah Hajj 22:77)

So do they want people NOT to attain salvation? Do they want people to spend the night in other activities, but NOT in worship?

Infinite blessings and salutations of peace be upon the Noble Prophet and our Master, Sayyyiduna Mohammed, and his noble progeny, his noble companions and all those who rightly follow him, until the Last Day.

May Allah guide us, and keep us all on the Straight Path. Aameen. All success is from Allah, and Allah knows best.

Aqib alQadri – may he be forgiven.

12 Sha'baan, 1436 (31 May 1436)

CHAPTER 7: THE RECOMMENDED SUPPLICATION ON THE 15TH NIGHT OF SHA'BAAN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اللَّهُمَّ يَا ذَا الْمَنِّ وَلَا يُمَنُّ عَلَيْهِ ○ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ○
يَا ذَا الطُّوْلِ وَالْإِنْعَامِ ○ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ظَهَرَ اللَّاجِينَ ○ وَجَارَ
الْمُسْتَجِيرِينَ ○ وَأَمَانَ الْخَائِفِينَ ○ اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ كَتَبْتَنِي
عِنْدَكَ فِي أُمَّ الْكِتَابِ شَقِيًّا أَوْ مُحْرُومًا أَوْ مَطْرُودًا أَوْ مُقْتَرًا عَلَيَّ فِي
الرِّزْقِ فَامْحُ ○ اللَّهُمَّ بِفَضْلِكَ شَقَاوَتِي وَحِرْمَانِي وَطَرْدِي
وَاقْتِتَارِ رِزْقِي ○ وَأَثْبِتْنِي عِنْدَكَ فِي أُمَّ الْكِتَابِ سَعِيدًا مَرزُوقًا
مُوفَّقًا لِلْخَيْرَاتِ ○ فَإِنَّكَ قُلْتَ وَقَوْلِكَ الْحَقُّ فِي كِتَابِكَ
الْمُنزَّلِ ○ عَلَى لِسَانِ نَبِيِّكَ الْمُرْسَلِ ○ يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ
وَيُثَبِّتُ ○ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ ○ إِلَهِي بِالتَّجَلِّي الْأَعْظَمِ فِي
لَيْلَةِ النَّصْفِ مِنْ شَهْرِ شَعْبَانَ الْمُكْرَمِ ○ الَّتِي يُفْرَقُ فِيهَا كُلُّ
أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ وَيُبْرَمُ ○ أَنْ تَكْشِفَ عَنَّا مِنَ الْبَلَاءِ وَالْبُلُوَاءِ مَا نَعْلَمُ وَمَا
لَا نَعْلَمُ ○ وَأَنْتَ بِهِ أَعْلَمُ ○ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْأَعَزُّ الْأَكْرَمُ ○ وَصَلَّى
اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ○
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○