


The Spiritual Reality of Saum (Fast)

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Translated
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English Translation of Urdu Book HAQEEQAT-E-ROZA

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Madzillah-ul-Aqdas

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Dedicated with all Respect and Love to my Perfect
Spiritual Guide

**Shabeeh-e-Ghaus-e-Azam, Sultan-ul-Ashiqeen
Khadim Sultan-ul-Faqr**

**Hazrat Sakhi Sultan Mohammad Najib-ur-Rehman
Madzillah-ul-Aqdas**

With a yearning desire to be blessed with the eternal
slavery of his court



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PREFACE

All praises to Allah Almighty Who is the Master and Creator of the universe. This book is an English translation of Urdu book “*Haqeeqat-e-Roza*” written by Shabeeh-e-Ghaus-e-Azam Sultan-ul-Ashiqeen Hazrat Sakhi Sultan Mohammad Najib-ur-Rehman Madzillah-ul-Aqdas.

In this materialistic world, all are involved in the worldly matters deeply and have no or little interest in the values of Islam and its teachings. Thus, there was a need to explain the actual purpose of the obligations and pillars of Islam. In order to give a complete and comprehensive collection about the reality of teachings of Islam, to make them easy and understandable for all, various books are published by Sultan-ul-Faqr Publications. This book explains about one of the obligatory pillars of Islam i.e. Saum (*to observe fast*) in which the teachings of Islam are precisely explained according to the Holy Quran, Sunnah, jurisprudence and in context of mystics with factual research.

Nowadays, people are busy in worldly affairs and have no time to get awareness of their real self. Muslims are practising all the prayers superficially which is just an exertion upon the physical body and they gain no spiritual benefit from it as these worships are deprived of the true essence and soul. The distressing thing is that we are unaware of the true path which leads us to Allah Almighty and purifies our soul to the extent that it unifies with Allah Almighty and grants the Divine vision and closeness. Islam is a beautiful religion and the religion of nature. Allah Almighty has created this universe on the basis of Divine Love (*Ishq*) and the main purpose behind the creation of human beings is to get His recognition. As, Allah says in a Qudsi Hadith:

كُنْتُ كَثْرًا عَجْفِيًّا فَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ أَعْرِفَ فَخَلَقْتُ الْخَلْقَ ❁

Meaning: I was a Hidden Treasure, I intended to be recognized so I created the creation.

This explains that the real purpose of the worships is to recognize Allah Almighty. Thus, this book elaborates the actual meaning of Saum with its real purpose i.e. to get the blessing of Divine love, closeness and vision of Allah Almighty in the light of Quran, Hadith and sayings of various Mystics and Saints whose efforts resulted in spreading Islam. All the aspects of Saum in the context of shariah, tareeqat and Divinity are splendidly explained in easy and comprehensive manner for the readers to get fully acquainted with the real soul of Saum.

The author of this book is the perfect spiritual guide, the 31st Shaikh of Sarwari Qadri order and the present true spiritual descendant of Sultan-ul-Arifeen Hazrat Sakhi Sultan Bahoo, Shabeeh-e-Ghaus-e-Azam, Sultan-ul-Ashiqeen Hazrat Sakhi Sultan Mohammad Najib-ur-Rehman Madzillah-ul-Aqdas. He has devoted his entire life for Allah Almighty and opened his court for all the seekers of Allah worldwide to get benefitted with the Divine vision and closeness. He is struggling day and night to spread the true teachings of Islam and the real purpose of creation among the masses. He grants the invocation and contemplation of personal name of Allah (*Ism Allah Zaat*) on the very first day of bayat (*oath of allegiance*) and discloses Its Theophanies upon the seeker. In order to reveal the actual purpose and soul of the adorations, he has written this book expertly, marvelously and splendidly with brief, accurate and precise teachings of Islam about Saum with its true meaning, obligations and blessings. He allowed my humble self to translate the book under his entire supervision. This book is necessity in this reign of revolt to clarify the concepts and beauty of the soul of Islam.

May Allah and His Prophet accept this book and forgive my mistakes and bless me with the eternal slavery of the court of Shabeeh-e-Ghaus-e-Azam, Sultan-ul-Ashiqeen Khadim Sultan-

ul-Faqr Hazrat Sakhi Sultan Mohammad Najib-ur-Rehman
Madzillah-ul-Aqdas and his guidance throughout my life. (Ameen)

Lahore

Dr. Muhammad Hamid Jamil Sarwari Qadri

November-2016

M.B.B.S





In the Name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

It is related from Hazrat Salman Farsi that the Holy Prophet Mohammad said during a sermon on the last day of Shaban:

- ❖ “O’ People! You have been protected by a blessed month (*Ramadan*¹), fasting during the day and establishing supererogatory prayers at night during this month is an obligation upon you by Allah. A person who will perform any virtuous deed to seek closeness of Allah in this month will be given a reward of an obligatory prayer. While, the reward of an obligatory prayer in Ramadan is as much as performing obligatory prayers seventy times in other months. It is the month of patience and the reward of patience is paradise. This month denotes equality, consolation and compassion. The sustenance of a Momin is enhanced in this month and whosoever helps in breaking the Saum² (*at the time of iftar*³) of a fasting person by providing him meal, his (*all*) sins are forgiven and he is liberated from the fire of hell and this will not lessen the reward of the fasting person.”

Hazrat Salman Farsi proceeds as:

- ❖ “We requested the Holy Prophet that some of us are unable to (*afford the expense to*) break the Saum of other (*Muslims*). The Holy Prophet replied, ‘Allah rewards the same to a person who breaks the fast (*of others*) even with a sip of milk, water or a date. Allah will allow the person who would have fully fed the fasting person to drink from my heavenly pond (*Hauz-e-Kausar*), he will not remain thirsty until he

¹ Ninth month of Islamic calendar

² Saum (*fast*) is one of the five pillars of Islam during which a person refrains from having meal and intercourse from pre-dawn till sunset.

³ Iftar is the time of ending fast.

enters the heaven. This is the month whose first segment is compassion, middle segment is forgiveness and the last segment is of salvation from fire (*of hell*). Allah forgives the person and liberates him from the hell who relieves his slaves (*from their duties*) during this month. (**Mishkat Sharif**)

The Holy Prophet said, “Rajb⁴ is the month of Allah, Shaban is mine and Ramadan is the month of my ummah.”

The word Ramadan is derivative of ‘Ramd’ رَمَضَ and the meaning of Ramd in Arabic language is ‘to burn’. This is the month which burns the sins of Muslims, that is why it has been named as Ramadan. The Arabic word for ‘Roza’ (*fasting*) is ‘Saum’ صَوْمٌ, which means to restrain or to stop. During the fast, Muslims restrain from having Halal⁵ meal from Fajr⁶ till Maghrib⁷, that is why it is called Saum.

DECREE OF OBLIGATION OF SAUM

The Divine command for making the Saum obligatory was decreed on 2nd Hijri, almost fifteen days following the event of “Tahweel-e-Qibla⁸”.

AIM OF MAKING SAUM OBLIGATORY

There is a purpose of every devotion and duty. What is the purpose of Saum? Let's see what Quran answers in this context.

⁴ Seventh month of Islamic calendar

⁵ The thing which is lawful according to shariah (*Islamic sacred law*)

⁶ Early morning prayer

⁷ Evening prayer

⁸ Qibla means the direction of offering prayer. In Makkah, the Holy Prophet had been offering prayer while facing towards Ka'aba but after migration to Madina Allah ordered the Muslims to face towards Bait-ul-Muqaddas while offering prayer. However, one day when the Holy Prophet and his sacred Companions were offering Zohar (*noon*) prayer, the revelation descended upon the Holy Prophet in which Allah decreed to change their direction towards Ka'aba immediately. So, the Holy Prophet and his Companions turned towards Ka'aba during the prayer. This event is called “Tahweel-e-Qibla” and it is mentioned in surah Al-Baqarah-verse 144.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ ﴿۱۸۳﴾
 لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقره-183)

Meaning: O' Believers! Saum is made obligatory for you as it was made obligatory for the people before you so that you may adopt Taqwa⁹. (Al-Baqarah-183)

This verse explains that the purpose of making the Saum incumbent is to make a Muslim pious i.e. he may adopt Taqwa by keeping Saum and become a Momin. The Holy Prophet said, "The one among you with greater piousness is better (*than other*) i.e. with greater Taqwa."

Now what is Taqwa?

Once, the Holy Prophet was asked about Taqwa, he pointed his finger towards his heart and said Taqwa lies here.

The closeness of heart (*innerself*) towards Allah is actually Taqwa. The extent of one's Taqwa shows his nearness to Allah Almighty, so Taqwa is the Divine closeness. Saum brings a person close to Allah and Allah says about this adoration, "Saum is for Me and I am its reward." It means the reward of Saum is the closeness of Allah Almighty.

It is said in the Holy Quran,

❖ Meaning: This book shows (*right*) path to the people of Taqwa. (Al-Baqarah-2)

This verse clearly states that only the people of Taqwa extract the right guidance from the Holy Quran.

The first level of Taqwa is to avoid the immoralities against which scholars and jurists have issued a verdict. This level of Taqwa is of common Muslims. Second level is to restrain from ambiguous things that are apparently declared Halal but still are

⁹ Taqwa literally means to have fear of Allah, abstain from sins and adopt pious deeds, but in reality Taqwa is a state of the heart's closeness to Allah. Taqwa refers to inward purity of a person which ultimately leads to have the vision of Allah.

doubtful, so to avoid them is Taqwa of the virtuous people. Third level is to avoid the things having even a slight suspicion of being Haram¹⁰. This is the grade of elevated pious people. Fourth grade is to avoid all those things which become a hurdle in the way of devotions and worships. This is the Taqwa of “Sidiqeen¹¹”. Thus, the first grade which is Taqwa of common people is to abandon infidelity and polytheism. Second grade of Taqwa is to abandon sins and things forbidden in shariah¹², hence, this is the Taqwa of devout. Third grade is of elevated ones, which reduces distracting thoughts during devotional practices. Those are in fourth grade who are persistent in renouncing everything except Allah and do not let even a single thought of any worldly distraction come in their heart. They have got salvation from Satan and nafs (*inner baser self*). This grade of Taqwa is of the most special men of Allah who are the Arifs¹³. They are actually the men of Taqwa and the beloveds of Allah.

As stated before, the main aim of Saum is to acquire Taqwa (*achieve Divine vision and closeness*). If Taqwa is acquired, one can gain real guidance from the Holy Quran, the Noor¹⁴ and the right path. Different levels and grades of Taqwa have been explained. The way a person tries to achieve the superior ranks in the world, similarly one should try to achieve the highest rank of Taqwa. Ramadan is the golden opportunity for a person who seeks true path from Allah Almighty and wants to achieve brilliance in Taqwa.

¹⁰ Things which are forbidden in shariah

¹¹ Truthfuls, Men of truth, the sacred Companions and Saints of highest level are included in this category of Allah’s men. According to the verse 69 of surah An-Nisa, Allah has categorized his special and chosen men in four grades i.e. the Prophets, the Sidiqeen, the Saliheen (*pious ones*) and the martyrs.

¹² Islamic sacred law

¹³ Knowers of Allah

¹⁴ Divine light

REWARD OF SAUM

The Holy Prophet said that Allah Almighty says, "I reward ten to seven hundred times for every virtuous deed, however, I am Myself the reward of Saum as it is especially for Me." The Holy Prophet said, "Patience is half faith and Saum is half patience." He also said, "Odor from the mouth of a fasting person is dearer to Allah than aroma of musk." Allah says, "My slave refrains from eating, drinking and having intercourse just for My sake, only I can reward for it." The Holy Prophet says, "The sleep of a fasting person is a devotion, his breathing is to glorify (*Allah*) and his prayer gets the status of acceptance." Also said, "The doors of paradise are opened and doors of hell are closed on arrival of the month of Ramadan. Devils are locked up and an announcer proclaims, 'O' seeker of virtue! Your time will come soon and O' seeker of evil! Stop; there is no place for you here."

OBLIGATIONS OF SAUM

There are different obligations of Saum, without them the Saum is incomplete. These are as following:

- ❖ It is obligatory to see the moon (*of month of Ramādan*). However, this obligation is fulfilled if the ruler of the state declares appearance of moon on the basis of witnesses. As, in Pakistan there is Ruet-e-Halal¹⁵ committee for this purpose. (*It announces the sighting of moon on behalf of all the community*).
- ❖ Intention (*of Saum*): Before beginning any task it is essential to pronounce its intention to get full benefit from it. It is necessary to intend for Saum like other tasks. If any person observes Saum without its prior intention, though avoids all the prohibitions of Saum even then it will not be

¹⁵ A central governmental department of Pakistan which announces the sighting of the new moon.

considered as fasting. Similarly if a person intends to observe Saum at night but later on changes his mind, then his intention ends and he has to intend for it again. If any person decides to break Saum though he does not break it, then his Saum is intact. Such intention does not affect fasting. In this context, Hazrat Hafsa relates that the Holy Prophet said, “A person has no Saum if he has not intended to observe it before breaking of dawn.”

- ❖ It is obligatory to avoid having meal, intercourse and having anything that reaches the stomach from any route (*i.e. parental or enteral*), self induced vomiting or anything that causes emanation, from the first flush of morning till sunset.

The violation of any of the above mentioned obligations breaks the Saum and its atonement is incumbent which includes to observe fast for two months continuously or to set free a slave¹⁶ or to feed sixty poor persons.

Saum is not affected by having meal forgetfully or by vomiting if it is not self induced and it is allowed to go near wives after breaking the fast, as Allah says:

- ❖ Your wives have been made lawful for you in the nights of Ramadan (*after breaking Saum*), they are your attire and you are like attire for them. Allah knows that you did treachery in your own rights. However, He has shown mercy upon you and has forgiven you. So, have intercourse with them (*during the nights of Ramadan*) and seek what Allah has prescribed for you. And keep eating and drinking until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct (*separated*) from the black thread (*of night*) to you. Then keep (*complete*) the fast till dusk and refrain from having intercourse with your wives, whilst you are in retreat in the mosques. These are the

¹⁶ Since slaves are not kept nowadays so the alternate of this atonement suggested by some religious scholars is to pay the due fine of the prisoners who are imprisoned just because they cannot pay the fine and let them be released.

boundaries set by Allah, so do not draw near (*i.e. step over*) them. Thus, Allah explains His verses clearly for the people, so that they may embrace Taqwa. **(Al-Baqarah-187)**

OMISSION OF SAUM

It is permitted for the travelers and sick to omit fast. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

- ❖ “These are fixed number of days, thus whoever amongst you is ill or on a journey, then he shall compensate fasting for the fixed number by (*fasting on*) other days. However, those who do not possess the power to observe Saum, it is obligatory upon them to feed a needy person in lieu of that. And whoever does (*greater*) good seeking consent (*of Allah*) that is better for him. And your fasting is better for yourself, if you understand. **(Al-Baqarah-184)**
- ❖ Women are relieved from fasting during their menstrual days, however it is essential to observe fast for these days after Ramadan.

SAUM OF TAREEQAT AND DIVINITY (*REALITY*)

Ghaus-ul-Azam Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani says:

- ❖ Saum of shariah is to refrain from having meal and intercourse during a specific period of time (*i.e. from breaking of dawn to dusk*). However, Saum of tareeqat¹⁷ is related with physical as well as spiritual self. It means that a person should avoid all those things which are forbidden in shariah and also refrain physically and spiritually from all the diseases of inner baser self i.e. pride, arrogance, vanity, greed, malignance, prejudice, narcissism and conceit etc. If he commits any of the above mentioned sins of inner baser

¹⁷ Spirituality

self, his Saum of tareeqat will become defective. The Saum of shariah is within a limit of time period (*i.e. from breaking of dawn to dusk*) but Saum of tareeqat is eternal and is the Saum of whole life. The Holy Prophet said, “There are many people who observe fast and get nothing from it except starvation and thirst.” That is why, it is said that there are many people who apparently observe fast but actually they do not and there are many who are outwardly not in the state of fasting but inwardly they are *i.e. they refrain themselves from the acts that are forbidden in shariah and avoid teasing other people*. Thereupon Allah says in a Qudsi Hadith, “Fasting is for Me and I am its reward.” The Holy Prophet says, “The person who observes fast is rewarded with two blessings, one is breaking the Saum and other is the blessing of vision.” May Allah grant us these pleasures too. The scholars of shariah have considered the meaning of “breaking the Saum” in this Hadith as to sever fast *i.e. to have meal at the time of sunset and the meaning of “vision” as to see the moon of Eid-ul-Fitr¹⁸ (first moon of Shawal¹⁹)*. However, the knowers of tareeqat consider the meaning of breaking the fast in this Hadith as to enter the heaven and break the fast by enjoying the blessings of Allah in it. While, the meaning of “vision” in this Hadith is the blessing of closeness of Allah Almighty and beholding Him in this world and hereafter with the spiritual eyes. May Allah grant us all these copious blessings.

The Saum of Divinity (*Reality*) means to purify the heart from all the worldly and heavenly wishes except the desire of Allah (*His closeness and vision*) and purify the sir’r²⁰

¹⁸ Religious celebration after the month of Ramadan on 1st of Shawal.

¹⁹ 10th month of Islamic calendar

²⁰ Literally ‘sir’r’ means ‘secret’. Sir’r is an inward part of the innerself of humans. The innerself of humans have seven layers *i.e. nafs (the baser self), qalb (heart or inward), rooh (soul), sir’r (the core where lies the Divine secret), khafi (the hidden, the Divine Soul), yakhfa (the origin, the Noor) and Ana (the Divine Essence)*.

from the love of everyone other than Allah Almighty. Thereupon Allah says in a Qudsi Hadith, “Human is My secret and I am his.” Sir’r is from the Noor (*Divine light*) of Allah Almighty therefore it is not inclined towards anyone except Allah. Thus, it has no love, desire and affection for anyone except Allah in this world and hereafter. If the sir’r of a seeker of Allah involves in the love of anyone except Allah, his Saum of Divinity gets imperfect. Its atonement is to disown the love of everything except Allah and consider the love of Allah above all, betake towards Allah Almighty and drown oneself in His love and vision. As Allah says in a Qudsi Hadith, “Saum is for Me and I am its reward.” (Sir’r-ul-Asrar)

❖ Hazrat Imam Ghazali says, “Saum is divided into three grades:

- Saum of the common people.
- Saum of the special people.
- Saum of the distinguished people.

Saum of the common people means to refrain from having meal and intercourse in specific time period and it is the lowest grade. However, highest grade is Saum of the distinguished people which includes purification of heart from the love of everything except Allah and submitting oneself completely to Allah. This means to keep the Saum both spiritually and physically (*inwardly and outwardly*). If a seeker of Allah leaves the zikr²¹ of Allah and converses about unnecessary worldly things, his Saum of Divinity breaks. Though it is rightful to think and ponder upon the worldly matters even then the Saum of distinguished ones is broken by thinking about worldly issues. However, pondering upon the matters which are helpful for the religion is not included

²¹ Repeated invocation of Allah’s name.

in the worldly issues. The religious scholars even consider that a sin is written in the record of a person who plans to arrange the sustenance for breaking the Saum because it depicts the fact that he does not believe in the promise of Allah about providing the sustenance. This is the status of Prophets and Sidiqeen. Not everyone reaches this status.

The Saum of the special ones is not only to refrain from having meal and intercourse but it is also to save every body part from all the evil doings and this Saum is completed by six things. First is to restrain eyes from seeing everything that diverts the heart away from Allah Almighty, especially to restrict eyes from watching anything which produces sensual desires because the Holy Prophet said that eyesight is one of the venomous arrows of Satan. Whosoever will control his eyesight due to the fear of Allah, Allah will grant him the dignity of faith that will adorn his heart. Hazrat Anas relates a Hadith that there are five things which shatter the Saum:

1. Lie
2. Backbiting
3. Captiousness
4. Perjury
5. Seeing someone with sensual desire

Second thing which fulfills the requirement of Saum is to avoid obscenity and unnecessary conversation. A person should either stay quiet or keep himself busy in reciting the Holy Quran or invocation of Allah Almighty. Having arguments and disputes is also included in obscene language. Some religious scholars also consider that even the Saum of common people is shattered by telling a lie and backbiting. It is related in a Hadith that in the era of the Holy Prophet, two

women were near to death due to thirst during their fast. They asked for permission to break their fast from the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet sent them a bowl to regurgitate in it. Both of them vomited blood clots in it. People were surprised following this incidence. The Holy Prophet said that both of those women kept their fast by eating the things which were permissible but demolished their fast by the things which were forbidden i.e. they did backbiting and the blood clots were flesh of the person whose backbiting they did.

The third thing is that a person should not listen obscene language because the language which is not allowed to speak should not be listened as well. A person who listens (*and believes*) lie and backbiting, shares the punishment of the person who does it. Fourth one is to refrain all the body parts from the evil doings. Metaphorically, a person who observes fast and stops eating food but keeps on committing evil is same as the person who avoids getting sick but keeps on eating toxins because wrongdoing is toxic while food is nourishment. Having excessive meal is also harmful, however, having the required and moderate sustenance is not detrimental therefore the Holy Prophet said that there are many who get nothing from Saum except hunger and thirst.

Fifth is that he should not take forbidden and doubtful eatables at the time of breaking fast. He should not have excessive food because there is no benefit in taking too many eatables at one time. The purpose of Saum is to crush the desires and eating too many edibles at a time boosts the desire, especially when they are of different varieties. The heart (*soul*) cannot be purified unless the stomach remains empty. Rather, it is the Sunnah²² that a person should reduce his sleep during the day and keep himself awake so that he

²² Way of the Holy Prophet.

may feel the effect of hunger and weakness. When he will eat less at night, he will be able to sleep early and wake up for Tahajud²³ prayer. The Holy Prophet said, “Near Allah, no filled vessel is worse than the stomach.” Sixth is that after breaking the Saum his heart remains in humility that whether his Saum is accredited or not.

Imam Hassan of Basra passed by a community on a particular Eid day who were busy in enjoyment. He said, “Allah Almighty has made the month of Ramadan an arena, so that people may augment and step forward in their worships. One faction took pre-eminence while the other left behind. I am surprised at the people who do not know the reality and yet they are cheerful. I swear to God if the reality is disclosed and the secret is revealed (*upon them*) then those whose worships are accepted will be blissful while those who have disapproved devotions will be in pain and no one will be indulged in pleasures.”

It is proved from all the facts that Saum of those people is useless who just satisfy the condition of avoiding meal rather their Saum is like a cadaver. The reality of Saum is that the person should make himself pure like the angels because angels are free of desires and animals are full of sensual desires, that is why they are much inferior to the angels. So every person whose sensual desires dominate him is like an animal and the one who has overcome his sensual desires is like an angel and shares the same attributes as angels. Due to these attributes, that person is near Allah just as the angels are near Allah. The person who fills his stomach to its desire and delays in establishing evening prayer, his sensual desire is enhanced. Thus, he is deprived of the real spirit of Saum.”
(Kimiya-e-Saadat)

²³ A voluntary prayer which is offered after mid night. It is not obligatory but has great importance.

ADORATIONS IN RAMADAN

The fervour for worships is increased in Ramadan. The state of turning towards Allah is augmented. A person feels contentment in invocation (*invocation and contemplation of Ism-e-Allah Zaat²⁴*), recitation of Quran, supererogatory prayers and in establishing prayers. The inclination to spend in the way of Allah Almighty is also enhanced. The Islamic society maintains its spiritual discipline. The best prayer in this month is to ask Allah for His closeness. A person, who succeeds to achieve the closeness of Allah Almighty in this month, fulfils the purpose for which Allah made the Saum obligatory i.e. to acquire Taqwa.

IMPORTANCE OF PRE-DAWN MEAL AND BREAKING FAST IN THE CONTEXT OF HADITH

- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Umro Bin Aas that the Holy Prophet said, “The difference between the Saum of Christians and Muslims is that the Muslims take pre-dawn meal.”
- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet prohibited observing fast without having pre-dawn meal. A person said to the Holy Prophet that you observe fast consecutively without having pre-dawn meal. The Holy Prophet replied, “Who amongst you can be like me? I spend whole night (*in Allah’s vision*), my Allah feeds me.”
- ❖ Hazrat Arbaz Bin Saria states that the Holy Prophet invited him at pre-dawn meal and said, “Come towards this auspicious meal.”
- ❖ Hazrat Abu Huraira relates that the Holy Prophet said, “Dates are a blessed food for the Momins at pre-dawn meal.”

²⁴ Personal name of Allah which represents the Divine Essence and all Divine attributes.

- ❖ It is also related that the Holy Prophet said, “When a person listens the Azan²⁵ of Fajr²⁶, he should not put down the bowl of water from his hands unless he drinks it to fulfill his need.”
- ❖ The Holy Prophet said, “Having pre-dawn meal is a blessing, do not abandon it. If there is nothing to eat then have a sip of water instead because Allah blesses those who take pre-dawn meal and the angels pray for them.” (**Musnad Ahmad, Maariful Hadith**)
- ❖ Hazrat Sahal relates that the Holy Prophet said, “People will remain fortunate until they will hurry in breaking the fast.”
- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Abu Hurraira that the Holy Prophet said, “Until the Muslims will keep hurrying in breaking the fast, the religion Islam will remain dominant because the non-Muslims (*Jews and Christians*) delay in breaking the fast.”
- ❖ Hazrat Zaid Bin Khalid relates that the Holy Prophet said, “One who will break the fast of any other person (*by providing him meal*) or aligns the goods and chattels of a Ghazi²⁷, he will get the same remuneration (*as that of the fasting person and the Ghazi*) accordingly.”
- ❖ Hazrat Abu Hurraira relates that the Holy Prophet said, “Allah Almighty says, among My men that person is dearer to Me who hurries in breaking the fast (*i.e. does not delay an instant after sunset*).”
- ❖ Hazrat Umar relates that the Holy Prophet said, “None of the prayers of a fasting person is rejected at the time of breaking the fast.”

²⁵ Call for prayer.

²⁶ The time for pre-dawn meal ends with the call of Fajr prayer.

²⁷ Muslim fighter or soldier who fights for the cause of religion.

- ❖ Hazrat Salman Bin Amir relates that the Holy Prophet said, "When any of you observe fast he should break it with a date because it is a blessing and if date is not available then break the fast with water because Allah made water vestal."
- ❖ Hazrat Anas relates that the Holy Prophet used to break the fast with a few dates before offering evening prayer and if wet dates were not available at that time then he would break the fast with dry dates and if they were also not available then he had a few sips of water."

TARAWIH PRAYER²⁸

Tarawih prayer is an emphasized Sunnah during Ramadan. This prayer is peculiar to Ramadan. It is offered after Isha (*night*) prayer and before Vitr²⁹. Tarawih prayer has twenty rakats³⁰ and ten salams i.e. after every two rakats there is a salam and after every four rakats there is a rest and glorification of God is desirable in this period. Tarawih prayer is offered during the whole month of Ramadan and a portion of Quran is recited³¹ in the way that the whole Quran is finished till the end of the month. However, if the Holy Quran finishes before time even then offering the Tarawih prayer is an emphasized Sunnah in the rest of the month.

The Holy Prophet said, "Allah Almighty made the Saum of Ramadan compulsory and (*by the decree of Allah*) I made the awakening of nights (*i.e. reciting and listening of Holy Quran in Tarawih prayer*) in the month of Ramadan a Sunnah (*emphasized Sunnah i.e. it is essential*) for you. The person will be like a new

²⁸ This prayer is an emphasized Sunnah and is obligatory only in Ramadan during night prayer.

²⁹ This is an incumbent prayer with three qayam, genuflexion and prostrations after Isha (*night*) prayer.

³⁰ A section of prayer which consists of qayam, genuflexion and prostration.

³¹ Quran is recited by the Imam who leads the prayer and has memorized the whole Quran while the followers only listen to it.

born infant and will be exempted from his sins who observes fasts and remains awake at nights whole heartedly with faith of earning virtue in the holy month of Ramadan.” (Sanai, Hayat-ul-Muslimeen)

LAYLAT-AL-QADR

(THE NIGHT OF DESTINY)

The word ليلة ‘Laylat’ is used for night in Arabic and the prevailing word for night in Persian language is ‘Shab’ شب. The meaning of ‘Qadr’ قدر is significance, value and magnificence. Thus, Lailat-al-Qadr means the night of blessing and significance. Allah Almighty blessed the Muslim ummah by means of His beloved Prophet Mohammad, a special night, in which the reward of devotions is better than the worship of thousands of months.

It is stated in the “*Muwatta Imam Malik*” that when the Holy Prophet was told about the long lives of previous ummahs, he expressed his concern that since people of his ummah have been granted short lives then how come their deeds would be equal to the people of other ummahs. Thus, Allah blessed the Holy Prophet with Laylat-al-Qadr ليلة القدر, the auspicious night of blessings which is superior to (*worships of*) thousands of months.

It is related from Hazrat Abdullah Bin Abbas that when the Jihad (*holy combat*) of an individual from Bani Israel³² for thousand years was discussed in the court of the Holy Prophet, he wondered about it and wished for his ummah as, “O’ my Lord! Due to the short lives of my ummah they will be unable to perform as much good deeds”, thus Allah Almighty blessed him with the Night of Destiny. (Tafseer Al-Khazin)

³² The ummah (*nation*) of Prophet Moses.

Imam Qartabi has written in “*Tafseer³³ Qartabi*” that once the Holy Prophet said while discussing Prophet Ayub (*Job*), Zakariya (*Zecgariah*), Hizqeel (*Ezekiel*) and Yusha (*Joshua*) that they worshipped Allah for more than eighty years and did not disobey Allah for even a single moment. The sacred Companions expressed positive envy for them, angel Gabriel (*Jibreel*) came in the holy court of the Prophet and said, “O’ beloved Prophet of Allah! Your sacred Companions are envying the previous ummahs for adorations of more than eighty years thus your Lord has blessed you more than this.” He then recited the surah Qadr before the Holy Prophet upon which the face of the Holy Prophet glowed with delight.

Imam Jalaluddin Suyuti relates from Hazrat Anas Bin Malik that the Holy Prophet said, “Allah Almighty has blessed only my ummah with the night of destiny i.e. Laylat-al-Qadr ليلة القدر and this supremacy has not been granted to any of the previous ummahs.”

Allah Almighty has granted the good news of bestowing this Night of Destiny on the ummah of Prophet Mohammad in surah Al-Qadr. Allah says in Surah Al-Qadr:

- ❖ Surely, we sent down this (*Holy Quran*) during the Night of Destiny (*Shab-e-Qadr*). And what do you think about this Night of Destiny? This Night of Destiny is better (*in supremacy and blessings*) than thousand of months. The angels and the Spirit of Peace (*Gabriel*) descend by their Lord’s command during this night with decrees concerning all the matters (*of blessings and bounties*). This (*night*) is (*absolutely*) peace and blessing till daybreak.

Allah has given excellence to some Prophets, humans, places, days and nights over other Prophets, humans, places, days and nights. Just as, the ummah of the Prophet Mohammad will get

³³ Exegesis

the reward of lacs of prayers by offering a single prayer in Masjid-al-Haram (*Sacred Mosque of Makkah*) and those offering it in Masjid-e-Nabwi or Masjid-e-Aqsa get the reward of fifty and twenty five thousand prayers respectively, likewise Allah has declared this night better than thousand nights i.e. eighty three years and four months. There are some reasons to declare this night superior to others:

- ❖ When the human being came into this world, his Creator blessed him with a complete guideline i.e. the Holy Quran for his guidance which was descended upon the worldly sky³⁴ during this night. It was the same night when the revelation of Holy Quran started in the cave of Hira³⁵.
- ❖ There are special revelations of the blessings of Allah Almighty from evening till dawn during this night and the Divine Theophanies fall upon His men throughout the whole night.
- ❖ There is a feeling of pleasure and relish in adorations during this night because in this night the arch angel Gabriel (*Jibreel*) alongwith other angels descend upon earth with the order of Allah Almighty to have vision and obeisance of His pious men as man is the noblest of all the creatures and prostrated by angels. These blessings and compassions of Allah Almighty continue till daybreak.

NIGHT OF DESTINY - GREAT BENEFACTION

It is related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said,

- ❖ “All the previous sins of a person are forgiven who establishes prayer in the auspicious Night of Destiny with the intention of earning virtue.” **(Bukhari)**

³⁴ There are seven skies, the worldly sky is the last one.

³⁵ Cave of Hira is a cave about 3 kilometers from Makkah on the mountain named Jabal al-Noor in the Hijaz region of present day Saudi Arabia.

Hazrat Anas narrates that once in the holy month of Ramadan the Holy Prophet said:

- ❖ “You have been blessed with a month whose one specific night is superior to thousand months. A person who is deprived of this night, eloquently he will remain deprived of all the blessings. Such a person is actually a rejected one.”

All the religious scholars consider that the Night of Destiny is hidden in the last decade of Ramadan especially in the odd nights. The sequence of odd and even nights varies with the geography as different regions have difference in time.

Abi Bin Ka’ab, Ibn-e-Abbas, Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, Imam Abu Hanifa and most of the exegetes and scholars have consensus that it is the twenty seventh night of Ramadan.

Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddis Dehlvi states that the Night of Destiny is the twenty seventh night of Ramadan. He interprets:

- ❖ The word ليلة القدر is comprised of nine letters according to its Arabic alphabets. This word is used in Surah Al-Qadr for three times. If we multiply three with nine, we get twenty seven as an answer. This concludes that the Night of Destiny is the twenty seventh night of Ramadan.

Surah Al-Qadr is adorned with thirty words. The twenty seventh word is the same word which is centered upon Laylat-al-Qadr. So, it is a gesture from Allah Almighty for wise people and Saints that the Night of Destiny is the twenty seventh night of Ramadan. **(Tafseer Azizi, pg 259)**

The logic behind non-fixation of exact date of the Night of Destiny is that the people may not believe that they have worshipped in the night which is better than thousand months, thus Allah has forgiven them and they have got higher ranks in the Divine court and blessed with the heaven. This thinking will make them leave their good deeds, feel contended and fall into

the trap of false expectations that will result into nothing but destruction. The reason of not informing about the exact Night of Destiny is the same as the reason of not informing about the time of death, that is the knower of time of death may not think as, I have a long life ahead and when the time of death will approach I shall seek forgiveness and will remain indulged in worships, hence I shall end up like pious ones. Allah kept the time of death secret from human beings so that they are perpetually alarmed of death and keep themselves busy in virtuous deeds and rectification of their inner-selves so that they become pious by the time death approaches. In this way, they would be able to enjoy the lawful delights of this world and will also be saved from the perdition in the hereafter due to the Compassion and Kindness of Allah.

NIGHT OF DESTINY-SIGNS AND OBSERVATIONS

The important signs of this night are:

- ❖ This night is bright and shiny.
- ❖ This night is moderate, neither too hot nor too cold.
- ❖ This night is pure and clear (*due to the excess of Theophanies*) as if the full moon is glowing.
- ❖ The demons are not hit by shooting stars during this night till morning i.e. meteors do not break.
- ❖ There is a lot of exhilaration and ecstasy especially during the late quarter of this night.
- ❖ While watching the sky, it seems as if Noor is descending upon the earth.
- ❖ The hearts of believers feel tranquility in adorations. Naturally their hearts incline more towards devotions.

- ❖ During this night some ancestors found the sea water very sweet and tasty.
- ❖ According to some people, everything goes into prostration during this celestial night, even the trees prostrate and bend down on earth and then come back to their fixed place.
- ❖ As compared to common people, the perspicacious have more Divine observations during this sacred night.

Actually, Allah reveals the reality of this celestial night upon those whom He wants to, otherwise one of the two people sitting along gets the splendor of this night while the other remains deprived of it. How can the charms and delights of this sacred night be described in words! The feeling of ecstasy and the Divine observations that come into one's experience cannot be expressed merely by words.

EFFECTS OF NIGHT OF DESTINY

- ❖ There is no heat of sun in the morning following the Night of Destiny. It glows without rays, like a smooth disc just as the full moon.
- ❖ Allah Almighty has banned the Satan from appearing with the sunrise of that day unlike other days with whose sunrise Satan appears along.

SPECIAL INVOCATION

Ummul Momineen³⁶ Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqa asked humbly, “O’ Prophet of Allah! If I get to know about the auspicious Night of Destiny then what should I do in that night.” The Holy Prophet told her to pray, “O’ My Creator! You are the Forgiver, forgiving is cherished by You, so please forgive me.”

³⁶ The mother of all Momins. This is the title of the sacred wives of Prophet Mohammad.

AITKAF³⁷

The excellence of the last decade of Ramadan is salvation from the hell fire and performing Aitkaf in this decade is an emphasized Sunnah as well as a Farz-e-Kifaya i.e. obligatory for all Muslims but if some of them perform it, others are exempted. Whosoever secludes in the last ten days of Ramadan, it is like performing two Hajj³⁸ and Umrahs³⁹ (*i.e. he will get the same reward*). **(Bayhaqi, Maariful Hadith)**

- ❖ It is related that the Holy Quran was recited before the Holy Prophet once every year but the year he passed away it was recited twice before him. The Holy Prophet used to perform Aitkaf for ten days every year but in the year of his demise he performed it for twenty days.
- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Anas that the Holy Prophet used to perform Aitkaf in the last ten days of Ramadan. One year he did not perform it. When the next Ramadan came he performed Aitkaf for twenty days.
- ❖ Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet said in favor of the person who performs Aitkaf, “He stays away from the sins. His virtuous deeds continue like pious people.”

It is narrated in Hadiths that when the last decade of Ramadan approached, a place in mosque was specified for the Holy Prophet. It was separated with a curtain and a mat was spread for him or a small camp was fixed for his seclusion.

³⁷ It is an adoration which includes the seclusion for specific days (*at least three*) in a specific place in a mosque in order to achieve the blessings and closeness of Allah. Women may adopt seclusion at their homes.

³⁸ Pilgrimage of Holy Ka'aba performed on 8th, 9th and 10th Zilhajj

³⁹ The non-obligatory lesser Hajj performed in Makkah during any time of the year other than the fixed days of Hajj.

EXCELLENCE OF SAUM

- ❖ Hazrat Sahal Bin Saad narrates that the Holy Prophet said, “There are eight doors of heaven, one is named as Rayan, only the people who keep fast can enter through this door.”
- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said, “There is a reward of seven hundred good deeds against ten virtuous deeds performed by the son of Adam in Ramadan alongwith the reward of his Saum (*which is separately rewarded by Allah Almighty*).” Allah has said, “Saum is for Me and I will reward for it.” A fasting person abstains from sensual desires and having meal due to his love for Allah. There are two times of delight for a fasting person, one is when he will break his fast (*by having meal at its specific time*) and the other when he will meet his Creator. The odor from the mouth of a fasting person is dear to Allah Almighty than the scent of musk. Saums are like shields against sins. When a person is fasting he should neither shout nor use obscene language and if someone abuses him, he should not react and should tell him that he is fasting.
- ❖ It is related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said, “Allah does not need a person who stops eating and drinking but continues doing wrong deeds and keeps telling lie.”
- ❖ It is also related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said, “A person who erroneously eats or drinks during his Saum, he should continue his Saum, as Allah has fed him.”

SADAQAH-E-FITR⁴⁰

The Holy Prophet said, “The Saum of a person remains suspended between the world and the heavens unless he pays the Sadaqah-e-Fitr.”

Sadaqah-e-Fitr is incumbent, if it has not been paid in the last year, it is necessary to pay it in the present year. There is no stipulation of Saum for paying Sadaqah-e-Fitr i.e. if a person has not observed Saum during Ramadan it is still necessary for him to pay it.

- ❖ Hazrat Abdullah Bin Umro Bin Aas relates that the Holy Prophet sent a person in the streets of Makkah to announce that Sadaqah-e-Fitr is essential for everyone whether he is a male or female, free man or a slave, child or an adult. It should be equal to the weight of almost four pounds of wheat or three and a half kilograms of any other grain or dates etc. (*or their equivalent price*) and it should be given before offering eid prayer.

FAREWELL TO RAMADAN

It is related from Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said, “My ummah is forgiven in the last night of Ramadan.” The Holy Prophet was asked, “O’ Prophet of Allah! Is that the Night of Destiny?” The Holy Prophet replied, “No! But if a person completes his job entirely, he is rewarded fully for it.”

May Allah bless us with the Divine Grace and wisdom to understand the essence of Saum and give us all the strength of observing the veritable and real Saum. (*Ameen*)

⁴⁰ Obligatory donation in the way of Allah during Ramadan which should be paid before Eid-ul-Fitr.

GLOSSARY

Aitkaf	It is an adoration which includes the seclusion for specific days (<i>at least three</i>) in a specific place in a mosque in order to achieve the blessings and closeness of Allah.
Arifs	Knowers of Allah
Azan	Call for prayer
Eid-ul-Fitr	Religious celebration after the month of Ramadan on 1st of Shawal.
Fajr	Morning prayer
Hajj	Pilgrimage of Holy Ka'aba performed on 8 th , 9 th and 10 th Zilhajj
Halal	Things which are lawful according to Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>)
Haram	Things which are forbidden in shariah
Isha Prayer	Night prayer
Jahad	The religious combat
Maghrib	Evening prayer
Momin	Faithful, true believer
Noor	Divine light
Rajb	Seventh month of the Islamic calendar.
Rakat	A section of prayer which consist of qayam, genuflexion and prostration.
Ramadan	Ninth month of the Islamic calendar.
Rayan	A door to heaven
Ruet-e-Hilal	A central governmental department of Pakistan which announces the sighting of the new moon.
Sadaqah-e-Fitr	Obligatory donation in the way of Allah during Ramadan which should be paid before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Saum	Saum is the pillar of Islam during which a person abstains from eating and drinking from pre-dawn till sunset.
Shaban	Tenth month of the Islamic calendar.
Shariah	Islamic sacred law
Sidiqeen	Truthfuls, Men of truth, the sacred Companions and Saints of highest level are included in this category of Allah's men. According to the verse 69 of surah An-Nisa, Allah has categorized his special and chosen men in four grades i.e. the Prophets, the Sidiqeen, the Saliheen (<i>pious ones</i>) and the martyrs.
Sir'r	Literally 'sir'r' means 'secret'. Sir'r is an inward part of the innerself of humans. The innerself of humans have seven layers i.e. nafs (<i>the baser self</i>) qalb (<i>heart or inward</i>), rooh (<i>soul</i>), sir'r (<i>the core where lies the Divine secret</i>), khafi (<i>the hidden, the Divine Soul</i>), yakhfa (<i>the origin, the Noor</i>) and Ana (<i>the Divine Essence</i>).
Sunnah	Ways and orders of the Holy Prophet
Tahajud	A voluntary prayer which is offered after mid night. It is not obligatory but has great importance.
Taqwa	Taqwa literally means to have fear of Allah, abstain from sins and adopt pious deeds, but in reality Taqwa is a state of the heart's closeness to Allah. Taqwa refers to inward purity of a person which ultimately leads to have the vision of Allah
Tarawih	This prayer is an emphasized Sunnah and is obligatory only in Ramadan during night prayer.
Tareeqat	Spirituality
Ummah	Nation
Ummul Momineen	The mother of all Momins. This is the title of the sacred wives of Prophet Mohammad.
Umrah	The non-obligatory lesser Hajj performed in Makkah during any time of the year other than the fixed days of Hajj.

Vitr	This is an incumbent prayer with three qayam, six genuflexion and prostrations after Isha (<i>night</i>) prayer.
Zikr	Repeated invocation of Allah's name



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The obligation, reward and the blessings of Saum are explained according to shariah, tareeqat and Divinity. This book centers upon the real essence of Saum and clarifies the concept of people about the reality of Saum in a brief and an excellent manner.



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