



CHARITY ON LAYLATU AL-Qadr

A widespread Misconception

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Can we specify a type of worship in Laylatul Qadr ?

In the name of Allah the most merciful, the bestower of Mercy. All praise belongs to Him alone without any partners. I send peace and blessings upon our noble prophet ﷺ and to his companions.

To proceed;

One of the many blessings and bounties that Allah has bestowed upon this Ummah is Laylatul Qadr, the night of decree. The worship performed in this night is better than the worship of a thousand months. The angel Jibreel and the other angels عليهم الصلاة والسلام descend with the permission of their lord, and there is peace and tranquility until the morning.

According to the vast majority of scholars Laylatul Qadr can be found in the last 10 nights of Ramadan as is reported in Bukhari & Muslim from the Hadeeth of Ibn Umar: (... look for it in the last seven nights) and in Bukhari (look for it in the odd nights of the last ten).

In these nights it is highly recommended to perform as many acts of worship as possible, from the recitation of the Quran to prayer and Dua. Remembering Allah often and giving in charity, removing a burden from a Muslim or showing kindness to an orphan, all of this is recommended. Allah has blessed us with many different types of acts of worship that we can choose from. It is truly the season for the righteous. May Allah make us of those who stand in Laylatul Qadr in a state of Eeman seeking his reward.

With that being said, one of our noble sisters - may Allah increase her in khair - has requested that I write a few words of advice to those who dedicate a specific type of worship such as Sadaqah or Umrah to Laylatul Qadr, in the hope that these words are of benefit to those who read it and a source of forgiveness and reward to the writer and the questioner.

We begin in the name of Allah seeking his aid and help with the following issues:

1 - The first issue we need to discuss is, are we able to know for certain which of the nights of the last 10 is Laylatul Qadr ? For how can we specify a worship in Laylatul Qadr if we don't even know when Laylatul Qadr is!

Know may Allah have mercy upon you that the companions differed in this issue, Muawaiyyah and Ubay bin Ka'ab considered the 27th night to be Laylatul Qadr while Aisha believed that this knowledge was hidden from us, Bayhaqi narrates that she said (if I knew which night was Laylatul Qadr I would have asked Allah for forgiveness). The common Fiqh principle tells us that if the companions differ on an issue then we take the opinion closest to the evidence, and in this case we have the Hadeeth of Ibn Abbas: (it is in the last five, it is in the last seven, it is in the last nine) This Hadeeth clearly tells us that it is in the last 10 nights and does not specify which night. So the answer to the original question is that we would not be able to know for certain which of the nights is Laylatul Qadr which means we cannot specify a particular type of worship in Laylatul Qadr as we do not know when Laylatul Qadr is. What is safer and closer to the Sunnah is to worship Allah in all of these nights.

2 - In this second issue we will answer the objective of the article which is: What is the ruling on specifying a type of worship in one of the last 10 nights such as the 27th ?

Know may Allah increase our love for the Sunnah that specifying a type of worship in any night in Ramadan is an innovation and has no basis in the Shareeah. It is an innovation simply because it was not narrated from the prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم nor his companions after him.

We find many ignorant people inviting to this innovation and encouraging one another to give in charity or perform Umrah on the 27th night thinking that this worship is rewarded more and is considered more virtuous than if it was performed on any other night. The reason this is an innovation is because specifying a worship in a specific time that is not ordained and sanctioned by Allah and his messenger is not permitted. The only type of worship specified for Laylatul Qadr is standing up for prayer and dua as reported in Bukhari & Muslim (The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whosoever performs Qiyam during Lailat-ul-Qadr (Night of Decree), with Faith and being hopeful of Allah's reward, will have his former sins forgiven.) In the case of performing Umrah, we know that the prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم encouraged us to perform Umrah in any time in Ramadan as reported in Bukhari & Muslim (Performing Umrah in Ramadan is equal to performing Hajj).

3 - In order for us to understand the aforementioned in more detail we need to comprehend a very important principle mentioned by Sh Salih Ibn Ul-Uthaimin رحمه الله تعالى in Al-Sharh Al-Mumti' which is; In order for an act of worship to be considered a Sunnah it must conform to the Shareeah in six things:

- The reason. Worship must have a valid "sabab" or reason supported by an evidence. For example the reason we begin our fast is because of the sighting of the moon and the reason we pray is because of the entrance of the time for each prayer. If we innovate a reason for a worship then we have fallen into a grave sin, an example of this is a person who prays two units of prayer every time they enter their home. This person has made the reason for praying entering the home which is an innovation.
- The type of worship must have an evidence, for example salat is a type of worship that has countless evidences. Celebrating the mawlid is an innovation because it is a new type of worship that has no basis in the Shareeah.
- The quantity of the worship must be supported with an evidence. For example the number of units for Maghrib is three based on the Sunnah so changing the quantity and praying five would be an innovation.
- The method (or how) of the worship must be in accordance to the Sunnah. For example we are instructed to pray similar to the prayer of our prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Praying any other way would be considered an innovation unless it is supported with an evidence even if considered weak or a valid Fiqh opinion from one of the imams.
- The period/time of the worship must be in accordance to the Sunnah. For example Hajj occurs from the 8th to the 13th of Dhul Hijjah every year, performing it outside these times is an innovation.
- The place in which the worship is to be performed must be in accordance to the Sunnah, such as Tawaf, it can only be performed around the Kaaba in Makkah.

Those who make the 27th of Ramadan a reason to perform Umrah have opposed the Sunnah because they made this night a reason for performing Umrah and this is a mistake. The companions - who are the most diligent and eager in worship - did not make the 27th a reason to perform Umrah. It is important to note that if a person happens to perform Umrah coincidentally in one of the odd nights without

making an intention to do so but rather this was most convenient for him then this is permitted and not considered an innovation.

4 - Imam Muslim reports in his Sahih from the Hadeeth of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: (Do not choose the Friday night among all other nights for standing in Tahajjud prayer and do not choose Friday among all other days for fasting except for what you are accustomed to.)

This Hadeeth is a clear indicator that specifying a type of worship in a specific period of time is not permitted unless there is a clear cut evidence. In fact the burden of proof is upon those who claim that specifying a worship in one of the nights of Ramadan is permitted. We ask them, what is your proof for this ? We say to them, bring forth your evidences if you are indeed truthful!

5 - There are some people who set up direct debits for the last ten nights with the intention of making sure that their charity coincides with an odd night. They believe they will be rewarded more for their charity, or those masaajid that encourage their congregation to give in charity specifically in the odd nights. This is also an innovation and has no basis.

Finally, I remind my brothers and sisters the importance of following the Sunnah to the letter and not deviating away from the path of our noble prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his righteous companions.

Unfortunately we live in an era where those who practice the Sunnah are labelled as extremists and those who water down the religion and are lax in their application of the Sunnah are considered moderate and modern. The solution is simple. Applying the Sunnah is the key to salvation. The last of this Ummah will not be rectified except by that which rectified the first and if you're able to not scratch your head except without an evidence then do so.

We ask Allah to lead us to the Sunnah and to bestow upon us the desire to follow it and we seek his refuge from falsehood and innovation.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

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