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Rajab: One of the Four Sacred Months

Rajab, the seventh month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is one of the four sacred months (al-ashhur al-ḥurum) in which fighting was prohibited during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. It is also considered a precursor to Ramaḍān, as it has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ would pray:

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ وَبَلِّغْنَا رَمَضَانَ

"O Allah, bless us in Rajab and Sha'bān, and allow us to reach Ramaḍān."

A significant event attributed to Rajab is the Isrā' and Mi'rāj, the miraculous night journey and ascension of the Prophet ﷺ. While the most popular opinion places this event on the 27th night of Rajab, scholars have differed regarding its exact date and month. The next article will cover the full details of the journey of Isrā' and Mi'rāj.

Despite the sacredness of Rajab, the Sharī'ah does not prescribe any specific acts of worship or rituals exclusive to this month. However, some misconceptions have emerged. For instance, the Ṣalātul Raghā'ib is a prayer said to be performed on the first Friday night of Rajab, involving twelve Rak'āt with specific recitations, including Sūrah al-Qadr and Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ. This practice has no basis in authentic sources and is deemed an innovation by scholars of Sharī'ah.

Similarly, some people believe performing 'Umrah in Rajab carries special merit. However, there is no authentic evidence from the Prophet ﷺ or his Companions supporting this belief. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah (RA) explicitly stated that the Prophet ﷺ did not perform 'Umrah in Rajab.

Muslims are encouraged to use Rajab as an opportunity to prepare spiritually for Ramaḍān through permissible acts of worship, such as voluntary prayers, fasting, and supplications, without adhering to unfounded customs or innovations. Let us remain mindful of the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah while observing this sacred month.

- **Maulana Ahmad Mohib Siddiqui**

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Second Journey to Syria and the Encounter with Nasṭūrā, the Monk

Khadījah (RA) was a highly respected and wealthy woman from a noble Arab clan. Known for her chastity and noble lineage, she earned the title al-Ṭāhirah (the pure) in both the Jāhiliyyah and Islamic eras. She engaged in trade using Muḍārabah (business partnership), and her goods often equalled the collective trade goods of the Quraysh.

At the age of 25, Rasūlullāh ﷺ had gained a reputation for trustworthiness and was widely referred to as al-Amīn. Khadījah (RA), impressed by his integrity, sent a message requesting him to take her trade goods to Syria. She offered to double his share of the profits compared to her other business partners. Due to his uncle Abū Ṭālib's financial struggles, Rasūlullāh ﷺ accepted the offer and set off with her servant, Maysarah.

Upon reaching Buṣrā, the Prophet ﷺ rested under a tree near a monk named Nasṭūrā. Seeing him, the monk approached and said: "No prophet since 'Īsā ibn Maryam (AS) has rested beneath this tree." He noted the redness in Nabī Muḥammad's ﷺ eyes, which Maysarah confirmed had always been there. The monk declared: "Indeed, this is the final Messenger."

During the journey, a man demanded Rasūlullāh ﷺ to swear an oath by the idols of Lāt and 'Uzzā. The Prophet ﷺ calmly replied: "I have never sworn by Lāt and 'Uzzā, nor do I even approach them." The man acknowledged his truthfulness, saying: "Your qualities match the descriptions in our scriptures."

Maysarah witnessed miraculous events, including two angels shading Rasūlullāh ﷺ during the midday heat. On their return, as Rasūlullāh ﷺ approached Makkah, Khadījah (RA) observed this extraordinary sight from an upper floor of her house and called others to witness it. Upon hearing Maysarah's account of the journey, including the monk's words and the unusual events, she was deeply moved.

The caravan brought unprecedented profits due to the barakah (blessings) of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Overwhelmed by the success, Khadījah (RA) rewarded him with much more than the initially agreed profit. These events further elevated her admiration for the Prophet ﷺ and laid the foundation for their future marriage.

Reference: Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawi, Seeratul Muṣṭafā (Pages 31-32)



The Rewards of Guiding Others

«مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هُدًى كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلُ أُجُورِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أُجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا وَمَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْئًا»

"Whoever calls to guidance will have a reward similar to those who follow him, without detracting from their rewards at all. Whoever calls to misguidance will have sin upon him similar to those who follow him, without detracting from their sins at all." (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 2674)

Appreciating our Elders

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal (RA) mentions: "For the last 30 years, I have not slept without first supplicating and seeking forgiveness for Imām Shāfi'ī (RA)." 'Abdullāh (RA), the son of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal (RA) says: "I asked my father: What type of person was Imām Shāfi'ī (RA), for I often hear you supplicating for him?" Imām Aḥmad (RA) replied, "O son! Imām Shāfi'ī (RA) was like the sun to this world and like health to the people. Tell me, is there anything that can possibly replace the sun and health?"

Lessons from the story:

Showing respect and honour to the 'Ulamā' and our seniors is an important part of our Dīn. Together with respecting and revering them, we should show appreciation and gratitude for the services and sacrifices they rendered for Dīn. One way of doing this is to regularly make Du'ā' for them.

If we cannot show adequate appreciation and respect to these eminent personalities, we should, at the very least, avoid speaking against them. After all, they are the people who paved the path for us to enjoy the Dīn of Islam today.

Just as we respect and honour the 'Ulamā' due to them being our spiritual Dīni parents, we also respect and honour the parents who are responsible for our physical existence. In fact, the right of the parents and the honour that should be afforded to them is even more than that of the 'Ulamā'. We should thus serve them with devotion and faithfulness and daily set aside time to make Du'ā' for them.

Reference: Rays of Radiance (page: 40-41)

Moderation in Conversation

The ability to communicate is a great blessing from Allāh ﷻ, and it carries immense importance in Islam. Speech has the power to unite people, promote understanding, and strengthen relationships, but it can also cause harm, misunderstandings, and conflict if misused.

The Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ emphasise the importance of moderation and wisdom in speech.

Allāh ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

"And speak to people kindly." (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:83)

In another verse, Allāh ﷻ commands:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

"And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—about all those [one] will be questioned." (Sūrah al-Isrā', 17:36)

These verses highlight the significance of speaking with respect, kindness, and knowledge, while refraining from careless or harmful speech. The Prophet ﷺ also emphasised moderation in numerous Aḥādīth. He ﷺ said in one narration:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

"Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 6136 & Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 47a)

He ﷺ also warned against excessive or idle talk, saying:

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مَا يَبَيِّنُ مَا فِيهَا يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ أَبْعَدَ مِمَّا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ

"A servant speaks words that he does not understand its repercussions but he sinks down in Hell-Fire farther than the distance between the east and the west." (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 2988b)

These teachings highlight the importance of mindful and moderate speech. Just as excessiveness can lead to errors and harm, speaking too little can render a person indifferent to others' needs and feelings, which contradicts Islamic values of care and compassion.

During a gathering, I had the honour of sitting in the company of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Tanwīr al-Ḥaqq Ṣaḥīb Thānwī (may Allāh preserve him), where he graciously offered me the following advice:

Ḥakīm Akhtar (RA) used to say that one should always maintain moderation in speech; otherwise, errors are inevitable. He explained this principle with an analogy: The habit of excessive or sparse speech can be likened to a well. If we continuously draw water from a well without pause, there will come a time when dirt will also start coming out because the well doesn't get a chance to clear itself.

Conversely, if water is left unused in the well for too long, dirt will accumulate within it. Hence, the best water is that which is drawn moderately. Similarly, a person who talks excessively—even if they are a great scholar—is likely to make mistakes.

On the other hand, a person who speaks so little that they don't even inquire about others' well-being appears unfamiliar with the etiquettes of conversation. The person who remains protected from errors is one who speaks with moderation, delivers speeches in a balanced manner, and engages in measured, deliberate conversation—just as the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ teaches us.

May Allāh ﷻ safeguard those who maintain this balance from mistakes.

- Maulana Ahmad Moim Siddiqui