



FIRST NIGHT OF SHABAN

Twelve Unit prayers

As mentioned in Iqbal al-A'mal, narrations have referred to many prayers to be offered at the first night of Sha'ban. One of these prayers is a twelve unit prayer in each unit of which Surah al-Faatehah is recited once and Surah al-Tawheed repeated eleven times.

FIRST DAY OF SHABAN

Fasting

A great reward is gained from fasting on the first day of Sha'ban. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq(a.s.) is reported as saying, "Paradise will be incumbently decided for one who observes fasting on the first day of Sha'ban."

reward of fasting and offer a two unit prayer

Likewise, Sayyid Ibn Tawus has narrated on the authority of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that an abundant reward will be conferred to one who observes fasting on three days in Sha'ban at the nights of which a two unit prayer is offered. In each unit of this prayer, one should recite Surah al-Faatehah once and Surah al-Tawheed eleven times.

It is also worth mentioning that the book of Tafsir (exegesis of the Holy Qur'an) that is ascribed to the Imam (a.s.) has comprised a narration referring to the great value of the month of Sha'ban. At the end of his Persian book of Kelimeh Teyyibeh, Shaykh al-Nuri, a master scholar, has referred to this narration, which is too long to be mentioned literally herein. However, let us refer to the summary of this wonderful narration:

Summary

On the first day of Sha'ban, Imam AliAmeer al-Momineen(a.s.) passed by a group of Muslims who sat in a mosque debating about theological matters, such as fatalism, with loud voices and intense arguments. The Imam (a.s.) stopped by them and greeted them. They responded to his greeting, made him room, and begged him to sit with them. However, the Imam (a.s.) did not care for them; rather, he addressed to them saying:

"O you people who discuss matters that are neither their business nor benefiting them! You should have known that Almighty Allah has certain servants who are silent although they are neither inexpressive nor mute.

Rather, whenever they consider the magnificence of Almighty Allah, their tongues die down, their hearts repose, their intellects halt, and their minds cease, on account of their glorifying, honoring, and feeling the majesty of Almighty Allah. When they regain consciousness, they compete with each other on seeking nearness to Him by means of pure acts. They regard themselves as wrongdoers and transgressors while they are free from any negligence or immoderation; rather, they do not accept to give little to Almighty Allah and they do not regard anything that they do for Him as adequate.

They therefore exert all efforts in acts of worship to Him. When you notice them as they prepare themselves for acts of worship, you find them fearful, frightened, anxious, and terrified.

Thus, great is the difference between them and you, the heretic people! You should have known that the more one may know about fatalism the more silent one will be. On the



contrary, the most ignorant with fatalism are those who debate about it very much.

O group of heretic people! This day is the first day of Sha'ban, the honorable month. Our Lord has given it this name (i.e. Sha'ban), because welfare is distributed in this month. Your Lord has opened wide the gates of His Paradise and offered you the palaces and bliss of Paradise with the cheapest costs and the easiest matters; therefore, you should purchase them.

On the other hand, Iblis the cursed (i.e. Satan) has presented before you the varieties of his evils and ordeals. You always wander in the paths of error and tyranny, taking the paths of Iblis and missing the paths of goodness whose doors are open wide before you.

This is the first day of Sha'ban. The sections of its benefits are prayer, almsgiving, enjoining the right, forbidding the wrong, piety to parents, relatives and neighbors, setting aright matters of difference, and conferring upon the poor and the needy with charity.

Nevertheless, you are discussing matters (i.e. fatality) that you are not asked to discuss and matters that you are asked not to deal with since they lead to revealing the secrets of Almighty Allah; and those who try to track the secrets of Almighty Allah shall be of those who will perish.

If you knew what our Lord - Majestic and Honorable is He - decided for His obedient servants on this day, you would certainly stop debating and take the initiative in carrying out the commandments by which you are bound."

The group then asked him, "O Ameer al-Momineen, what has Almighty Allah decided for His obedient servants on this day?"

Imam Ali(a.s.) then narrated to them that

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), once, sent an army to counter the atheists. It was very dark night when the camp of the Muslim army was attacked by the atheists. All Muslims were asleep except Zayd ibn Harithah, 'Abdullah ibn Rawahah, Qutadah ibn Nu'man, and Qays ibn 'Asim al-Minqari. These individuals were taking the sides of the camp reciting the Holy Qur'an and offering prayers.

When the enemies were about to raid the Muslims, lights came out from the mouths of these wakeful individuals to light up the whole camp and supply the Muslims with power and courage due to which they could overcome their enemies causing them to be killed, wounded, or taken as captives.

When the Muslims returned home, they informed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) about the whole story. He (s.a.w.a.) therefore commented, "These lights were the result of the acts of worship these individuals did on the first day of Sha'ban."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then mentioned each and every deed that these individuals had done on the first day of Sha'ban.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then mentioned each and every deed that these individuals had done on the first day of Sha'ban. He then said, "On the first day of Sha'ban, Iblis distributes his hosts all over the earth and instructs them to try their best to attract as many numbers of people as possible. On the other side, Almighty Allah distributes His angels all over the earth and asks them to guide His servants to righteousness. Accordingly, the all will be happy except those who intentionally choose to reject and do wrong and, thus, join the party of Iblis.



Furthermore, on the first day of Sha'ban, Almighty Allah gives the orders of opening the gate of Paradise and orders the Tree of Tuba (joy) to lower its twigs towards this world. Then, a caller will shout out on behalf of our Lord, 'O Servants of Allah, these are the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. You must hang on to them so that they will raise you to Paradise. These are also the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum. Beware lest they will take you to Hellfire.'

(The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then continues,)

I swear by Him Who has chosen me for conveying the (Divine) Mission as a prophet, anyone who tries any of the doors of decency on this day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba and it will lead him to Paradise. But anyone who tries any of the doors of evil on this day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum and it will lead him to Hellfire.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then said;

Thus, one who voluntarily offers a prayer on this day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. One who observes fasting on this day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who reconciles between two spouses, between a father and his son, between two relatives, between two neighbors, or between any two individuals will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who grants respite or releases an insolvent debtor from the debt will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who, after checking his accounts, finds out that he owed somebody an amount and thus he settles that debt will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who volunteers to maintain for an orphan will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. One who refrains a wicked individual from reviling at the honor of a believer will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who recites the Holy Qur'an or even a portion of it will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. One who frees himself for mentioning and thanking the graces of Almighty Allah will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. One who visits an ailed person will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. One who acts piously to his parents or one of them on that day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

One who seeks his parents' satisfaction on that day after he has enraged them will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba. In general, anyone who does any act of decency on that day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Tuba.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then continues; I swear by Him Who has chosen me for conveying the (Divine) Mission as a prophet,

anyone who does any act of wickedness or disobedience to Almighty Allah on that day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum, which will take him to Hellfire.

I swear by Him Who has chosen me for conveying the (Divine) Mission as a prophet,

one who neglects or disregards the obligatory prayer will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

If one is visited by a needy person while he knows his actual financial situation and he has the capability to change it without causing himself any harm and without the existence of another person who can do this mission; nevertheless, he



ignores and leaves him encountering his neediness, he will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

If one rejects the apology of one who had wronged him then he punishes him more than the required, he will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

If one makes quarrel between two spouses, between a father and his son, between two brothers, between two relatives, between two neighbors, between two friends, or between two sisters, he will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who deepens the problems of an insolvent debtor while he is aware of his insolvency and hardship will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who illegally denies the loan that he has taken from somebody and, moreover, transgresses him will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who turns away from, harms, and spoils the property of an orphan will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who ascribes dishonor to a faithful individual and urges people to think ill of him will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who sings a song that leads to acts of disobedience to Almighty Allah will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who recounts his ill deeds in battles and his wrongdoings against people, taking pride in them, will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who neglects visiting his ailed neighbor and does not participate in his funeral ceremony on account of belittling him will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who turns away from an injured person on account of disdain, contempt, or disparagement will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

One who acts impiously to his parents or one of them or does not please them on this day on account of a previous impiety to them will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

In general, anyone who commits any act of indecency on that day will hang on to one of the twigs of the Tree of Zaqqum.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) further said;

I swear by Him Who has chosen me for conveying the (Divine) Mission as a prophet, those who hang on to the twigs of the Tree of Tuba will be raised to Paradise.'

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then raised his sight toward the heavens for a while and smiled pleasingly. He then lowered his sight toward the earth and frowned.

He then turned his face towards his companions and said,

"I swear by Him Who has chosen Muhammad of conveying the Divine Mission as a prophet, I have just seen the Tree of Tuba raising its twigs and I have seen it taking those who hanged on to its twigs to Paradise. I have also seen some people hanging on to one twig, others to two, or even more according to their deeds of obedience to Almighty Allah.

I can see Zayd ibn Harithah hanging on to all of its twigs and it is raising him up. Because of this, I smiled pleasingly.



I then looked at the ground and, I swear by Him Who has chosen me for conveying the Mission as a prophet, I have seen the Tree of Zaqqum lowering its twigs and leading those who have hanged on to it to Hellfire. I have seen some of them hanging on to one twig, others to two, and so on, according to their acts of disobedience. I can see some of the hypocrites hanging on to all the twigs and the Tree of Zaqqum is taking them to the lowest of its stages. because of this, I frowned.”

وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ-

اور محمدؐ اور انکی تمام آلؑ پر اللہ رحمت فرمائے۔

and (please do) bless Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad (all of them)