

Night of Forgiveness: Laylat al-Baraat

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(وَأَنْعَصِرْ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣))

وَعَنْ عَلِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ:

« إِذَا كَانَتْ لَيْلَةُ النَّصْفِ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ فَقُومُوا لَيْلَهَا وَصُومُوا يَوْمَهَا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَنْزِلُ فِيهَا لِعُرُوبِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا فَيَقُولُ: أَلَا مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ؟ أَلَا مُسْتَرْزِقٌ فَأَرْزُقَهُ؟ أَلَا مُبْتَلَى فَأَعَافِيَهُ؟ أَلَا كَذَا أَلَا كَذَا حَتَّى يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ »

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The shadow of the blessed month of Ramadan, the sultan of the months and the source of peace to our hearts, is around the corner. This coming Saturday, the 15th night of the month of Sha'ban, we will, InshAllah, observe the Night of Baraat. The word "baraat" in Arabic, meaning to be freed from sin, debt, and punishment, signifies purification from sins and attaining the mercy and forgiveness of the Almighty Allah. Because of the glad tidings of abundant forgiveness and pardon from Allah (swt), this night is called "Night of Baraat". In view of the significance of this night, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: **"Observe fasting on the 15th day of Sha'ban and spend its night in worship, for on this night, at sunset, Allah descends to the nearest heaven and announces, 'Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that I may forgive them? Is there anyone asking for sustenance, so that I may provide for them? Is there anyone afflicted, so that I may grant them relief?'"**¹

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

In the verse depicting the general condition of humanity, Allah (swt) swears by time, saying, **"By the time! Indeed, mankind is in loss. Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience."**² We, as humans, are not free from mistakes and wrongdoings, especially in an age where committing sins is easy and almost encouraged. Unfortunately, amidst the daily flow of life, we may struggle to protect ourselves from sins stemming from ignorance and carelessness.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

A believer never loses hope in the mercy and compassion of Allah (swt). Allah (swt) says in the Quran, **"Say, 'O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.'"**³ Additionally, in a sacred saying of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), Allah emphasises His infinite mercy towards His servants by stating, **"My mercy prevails over My wrath."**⁴ This highlights the boundless mercy of Allah, the Most Merciful, towards His creation.

Dear Jama'ah!

Until the Day of Judgment, our Prophet (saw), who is the most beautiful example for us, sought refuge in Allah's mercy by supplicating, **"O Allah! I seek refuge in Your forgiveness from Your punishment, in Your pleasure from Your wrath, and in You from You. Your glory is exalted, and I am incapable of praising You in a manner befitting Your greatness."**⁵ We should always, especially on blessed nights like the Night of Baraat, seek refuge in the mercy of Allah (swt). Let us remember the earthquake that devastated our hearts a year ago, leaving many people broke overnight and causing the loss of their families and loved ones. Let us not forget our brothers and sisters in Gaza who have been relentlessly bombarded for four months and are struggling to survive in the most difficult conditions. Let us remember in our prayers our brothers and sisters in East Turkestan who are subjected to genocide regardless of their gender or age, simply because they are Muslims. Let us not neglect to pray for their salvation and safety on the Night of Baraat. Humanity has no guarantee for tomorrow. Let us evaluate our actions and deeds to be upright as we are commanded. Let us strive to be the Muslims that Allah and His Messenger desire. May the month of Ramadan and the three sacred months be a means for this.

May Allah (swt) the Most Merciful and Compassionate, grant goodness and blessings to the entire ummah of Muhammad on this blessed night. May our Night of Baraat be blessed. Ameen.

¹ Ibn Mâce, ikâmet, 191

² Surah Al-Asr, 103, 1-3

³ Surah Al-An'am, 6:54

⁴ Buhârî; Tevhid 15, Bedi'ül'-Halk 1. Müslim; Tevbe 14,

⁵ Müslim, Salat, 222