

The Month of Sha'ban and the Night of Baraat: Opportunities for Forgiveness and Spiritual Purification

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ
سُورَةُ آلِ عُمَرَانَ (١٣٣/٣)

عَنْ أَسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ:
«فُلِتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، لَمْ أَرَكَ تَصُومُ مِنْ شَهْرٍ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ مَا
تَصُومُ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ؟ فَقَالَ: ذَلِكَ شَهْرٌ يَغْفِلُ النَّاسُ عَنْهُ بَيْنَ رَجَبٍ
وَرَمَضَانَ، وَهُوَ شَهْرٌ تُرْفَعُ فِيهِ الْأَعْمَالُ إِلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمَيْنَ، فَأُحِبُّ
أَنْ يُرْفَعَ عَمَلِي وَأَنَا صَائِمٌ»
السَّنَاءُ، الصَّوْمُ ٧.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The month of Sha'ban in which we find ourselves is a special period that prepares us for Ramadan. This month is not only a transitional phase leading to Ramadan; rather, it is a time of self-reflection in which hearts are purified and intentions are reviewed. The Night of Baraat, which falls on the fifteenth night of Sha'ban, is a blessed night when this reflection deepens and the servant turns to Allah (swt), hoping to be relieved of their burdens. With these thoughts, I wish you a blessed night in advance, which we will observe on Monday night, 2 February.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

In religious terms, baraat refers to a servant being cleansed of sins and seeking refuge in Allah's forgiveness. This night should not be one in which we passively await forgiveness and then return to our routines the next morning; rather, it should be observed as a night of actively seeking forgiveness and reshaping our lives accordingly. When our Allah (swt) says, "**Hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and to a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous.**"¹ He teaches us that forgiveness is attained not through complacency, but through conscious turning to Him and sincere effort.

Dear Jama'ah!

The month of Sha'ban is one to which our Prophet (saw) gave special importance in worship. According to the narration of Usama ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (saw) would frequently fast during this month. When asked about the wisdom behind this, he said: "*This is a month that many people neglect, as it falls between Rajab and Ramadan. In this month, deeds are presented to the Lord of the worlds, and I wish for my deeds to be presented while I am fasting.*"² This hadith warns us against neglecting the month of Sha'ban and directs us toward a conscious form of worship, free from neglect.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Allah (swt) reminds us of the reality of the Hereafter in the Qur'an as follows: "**And the record will be placed [open], and you will see the criminals fearful of what is within it, saying, 'Woe to us! What is this record that leaves nothing small or great except that it has enumerated it?'** And they will find what they did present [before them]. And your Lord does injustice to no one."

³ The Night of Baraat, in the light of this and similar divine reminders, is a time for self-accountability. There is no specific act of worship prescribed exclusively for this night. However, turning to Allah through prayer, supplication, repentance, remembrance, reflection and recitation of the Qur'an is in harmony with the essence of the night. What truly matters is not the quantity of worship, but its sincerity and its reflection in one's life.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The Night of Baraat is a call to prepare for the approaching month of Ramadan with a purified heart. Let us observe this night not only by seeking forgiveness from Allah (swt), but also by striving to be forgiving, to take responsibility and to reform our lives. Let us cleanse our hearts of resentment and grudges and review our words and actions.

O Allah! Make us among Your servants who turn to Your forgiveness, who are conscious of their responsibilities and who hasten toward Your mercy. Grant us the ability to make the best use of the month of Sha'ban and to reach Ramadan with health and faith. Ameen.