

ARTICLE

The Virtue of Certain Places and Days

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We praise Allah Ta'ala and invoke His choicest mercies and blessings on Rasulullah Sallallahu alayhi wasallam

By His perfect choice and complete power over everything, Allah Ta'ala has defined various ranks among His creation. Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran, "Your Rabb creates whatever He wills and He selects. People have no choice in the matter. Allah is Pure and Exalted above all partners that people ascribe to Him." [1]

Ulema renowned for their deep research are of the opinion that Allah Ta'ala has attached special virtue to certain times and places. These times and places therefore possess special virtue within themselves and not because of their relationship with something else. Allama Ibn Qayyim Rahmatullahi Alayhi has mentioned this at the beginning of his book "Zadul Ma'ad" and Allama Shabbier Ahmad Uthmani Rahmatullahi Alayhi has also mentioned it briefly in his commentary of Bukhari entitled "Taqreere Bukhari". To prove this point, he asks whether rose water and urine are the same entities with only a difference in smell. He answers this himself by asserting that it is obvious that the two are completely different entities. Just as these two things are completely different, so too is the difference between Hadhrat Moosa Alayhis Salam and Firoun. The same difference exists between Hadhrat Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam and Abu Jahal. Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi Rahmatullahi Alayhi also supports this opinion. This opinion is most correct and anyone opposing it is certainly mistaken.

Is Laylatul Qadr the same as every night of the year? Of course not! Does Laylatul Qadr receive its special virtue because of the Ibadah (worship) carried out on this night? Certainly not! It is because of the special virtue within this night that Ibadah is carried out with added importance. Similarly, the month of Ramadhan does not derive its special virtue because the Qur'an was revealed during this month. It is rather because of the special virtue given to this month that it was chosen for the revelation of the Qur'an. Of course, the fact that the Qur'an was revealed in the month of Ramadhan does lend added virtue to the month.

It is from several verses of the Qur'an that Allama Ibn Qayyim Rahmatullahi Alayhi has deduced that certain places and times have added virtue within themselves and not because of their relationship with another factor. Among these verses is the verse of Surah An'am [2] where Allah Ta'ala says, "Allah Ta'ala knows best where (i.e. with whom) He wishes to entrust His message." [3] From mankind, Allah Ta'ala has granted special virtue to the Ambiya (Prophets) (A.S) because they were selected to convey His messages to the masses. Furthermore, Allah Ta'ala has also granted some Ambiya (A.S) added virtue over the others. There is thus a hierarchy among the Ambiya (A.S) themselves. Allah Ta'ala states in Surah Baqara [4], "These are the messengers, some of whom We have given excellence over others."

From among the days, Allah Ta'ala has given special virtue to the days of Ramadhan and the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. From among the nights, special virtue has been given to the night of Qadr (Power) and the night of Bara'ah (15th night of Shaban). It is also common knowledge that Makkah Mukarrama and Madinah Munawwara enjoy special virtue above other places on earth. The same applies for other

times and places.

The month of Muharram and the day of Ashura

The Ahadeeth mention that the month of Muharram and the day of Ashura (10th of Muharram) enjoy special virtues that other days do not possess. It is with regard to these virtues that this booklet has been prepared. The Qur'an mentions the virtue of the "As'hurul Hurum" ("The Sacred Months"). Among these months is also the month of Muharram, as specified by the Qur'an and the Ahadeeth of Rasulullah Sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam.

A note of caution

Although certain virtues of Muharram and the day of Ashura have been mentioned in the Ahadeeth, there are many baseless beliefs concerning this month and day that have spread in the Ummah. The Muhadditheen (scholars of Ahadeeth) can find no substantiation for many of these beliefs concerning Muharram and the day of Ashura even though such beliefs are regarded as common knowledge. It is therefore necessary to be cautious in this regard. One of the objectives of this booklet is to bring such unsubstantiated beliefs to light.

Our Shari'ah is founded on the Qur'an and the practices of Rasulullah Sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam. Just as the injunctions of the Shari'ah are grounded in these two sources, so too are the virtues of deeds. No due is given to fabricated narrations in this regard. Of course, when the narrations of the Sahabah Radhi-Allahu 'anhum and the Tabi'een [5] Rahmatullahi Alayhi reach us through reliable sources, their word will be placed on the same platform as the Ahadeeth concerning matters about which they were unable to form their own opinion. Because they cannot form their own opinion concerning the virtues of deeds, their narrations about such virtues will be regarded as being heard from Rasulullah Sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam.

Although the injunctions of the Shari'ah are also sourced from Ijma [6] and Qiyas [7], these two sources cannot be used to prove the virtue of any deed, place or time. To prove such virtues, a clear narration from Allah Ta'ala or His Rasul Sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam is required. When such a narration is found, it is the duty of the Muhadditheen to judge its authenticity. It is therefore necessary for the person presenting such a narration to also furnish a reference for such a narration so that it can be verified. The Muhadditheen have already written many books concerning those Ahadeeth that have become popular among Muslims that are not authentic. Among such books are "Al Maqasidul Hasana" written by Allama Sakhawi Rahmatullahi Alayhi, "Kashful Khifa" by Allama Ajlooni Rahmatullahi Alayhi and "At Tadhkira" by Imam Zarkashi Rahmatullahi Alayhi.

[1] Surah Qasas (Surah 28), verse 68.

[2] Surah An'aam (Surah 6), verse 124.

[3] Taqreere Bukhari Pg. 84, printed in Dabhel, India.

[4] Surah 2, verse 253.

[5] Muslims who saw the Sahabah Radhi-Allahu 'anhum.

[6] Consensus of opinion among the jurists.

[7] Analytical deduction of the jurists.