

Optional (*Nafil*) prayers for *Shabe Barā'at* (*Layla al-Nisf min Sha'bān*)

The importance of this night

The fifteenth night of Sha'bān is an important night in the Islamic calendar. In Arabic, this night is called '*Layla al-Nisf min Sha'bān*', meaning the 'middle night of Sha'bān.' It is also called *Layla al-Barā'a* or *Shabe Barā'at*, (*Shabe* is Persian for night), which means 'the night of immunity'. The night is so called because Allāh offers immunity from the fire of Hell for those who repent to Him sincerely on this night. Abū Mūsā al-Asharī (may Allāh be pleased with him) reports that the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allāh be upon him) said:

'Allāh Almighty descends on His creation on the middle night of Sha'bān and forgives His creation, except for the polytheist and the one who shows animosity' (*Musnad Ahmad*).

In his *Sunan*, Imām al-Tirmidhī reports that Sayyida Ā'isha (may Allāh be pleased with her) narrated that:

'I missed Allāh's Messenger (peace & blessings of Allāh be upon him) during the night and found him in al-Baqī. He said: 'Were you afraid that Allāh and His Messenger would deal unjustly with you?' I said: 'O Allāh's Messenger, I thought that you had gone to some of your other wives.' He (the Prophet) said: 'Verily Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, comes down to the heaven of the world in the middle night of Sha'bān and forgives sins more abundantly than the hairs of the goats of Banū Kalb.'

Imām al-Shāfi'ī, one of the four great Imāms, said:

'It has reached us that it is said that there are five nights when the *Du'ās* are accepted; the night of Friday, the night of *Eid al-Adhā*, the night of *Eid al-Fitr*, the first night of Rajab and the fifteenth of Sha'bān.'

The optional (*Nafil*) prayers for this night

a. Perform six units of optional prayers (six *rak'āts* of *Nafil*, in twos) after Maghrib Salāh on the occasion of *Shabe Barā'at*. In each *rak'āt*, recite Sūrah al-Fātiha once and Sūrah al-Ikhlās three times. After performing each two *rak'āts*, recite Sūrah Yāsīn once and Sūrah al-Ikhlās twenty one times. As you perform the first two *rak'āts*, do *Du'ā* to Allāh to grant you a long and prosperous life. As you perform the middle two, perform *Du'ā* to Allāh to protect our families and to provide us with pure sustenance (*Rizq*). On the final two, supplicate to Allāh to make you dependant on Him alone, and to protect us against misfortunes. After these six *rak'āts*, recite this special *Du'ā*:

اللَّهُمَّ يَا ذَا الْمَنِّ وَ لَا يُمْنُ عَلَيْهِ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَ الْإِكْرَامِ يَا ذَا الطُّولِ وَ الْإِنْعَامِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ظَهَرَ لِأَجِينِ وَ جَارَ الْمُسْتَجِيرِينَ وَ أَمَانَ الْخَائِفِينَ - اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ كَتَبْتَنِي عِنْدَكَ فِي أُمَّ الْكِتَابِ شَقِيًّا أَوْ مَحْرُومًا أَوْ مَطْرُودًا أَوْ مُقْتَرًا عَلَيَّ فِي الرِّزْقِ فَامْحُ اللَّهُمَّ بِفَضْلِكَ شَقَاوَتِي وَ جُرْمَانِي وَ طَرِدِي وَ اقْتِنَارَ رِزْقِي وَ اثْبِتْنِي عِنْدَكَ فِي أُمَّ الْكِتَابِ سَعِيدًا مَرْزُوقًا مُوَفَّقًا لِلْخَيْرَاتِ - فَإِنَّكَ قُلْتَ وَ قَوْلُكَ الْحَقُّ فِي كِتَابِكَ الْمُنزَلِ عَلَيَّ لِسَانِ نَبِيِّكَ الْمُرْسَلِ بِمَجْهُدِ اللَّهِ مَا يَشَاءُ وَ يُنْبِتُ وَ عِنْدَهُ أُمَّ الْكِتَابِ - إِلَهِي بِالتَّجَلِّي الْأَعْظَمِ فِي لَيْلَةِ النَّصْفِ مِنْ شَهْرِ شَعْبَانَ الْمُكَرَّمِ الَّتِي يُفْرَقُ فِيهَا كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ وَ يُبْرَمُ أَنْ تَكْشِفَ عَنَّا مِنَ الْبَلَاءِ وَ الْبَلَاءِ مَا نَعْلَمُ وَ مَا لَا نَعْلَمُ وَ مَا أَنْتَ بِهِ أَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْأَعَزُّ الْأَكْرَمُ - وَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيَّ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَيَّ إِلَهِي وَ صَحْبِهِ وَ سَلَّمَ وَ أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

b. Perform a twelve *rak'at Nafl* prayer. In each *rak'at*, recite Sūrah al-Fātiha once and Sūrah al-Ikhlās ten times. After concluding the Salāh, recite the third *Kalima Sharīf* ten times (mentioned below), the fourth *Kalima Sharīf* ten times (mentioned below) and *Durūd Sharīf* one hundred times (mentioned below).

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَ لَا حَوْلَ وَ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

'Glory be to Allāh and all praise be to Allāh. [And] there is no god but Allāh and Allāh is the Greatest. And there is no power and might except from Allāh, the most-High, the most-Grand.'

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَ يُمِيتُ وَ هُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ أَبَدًا أَبَدًا ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَ الْإِكْرَامِ بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ وَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

'There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. He is One, there is no partner for Him. For Him is the kingdom and for Him is all praise. He gives life and causes death. And He is alive. He will never, ever die, the possessor of majesty and reverence. In His Hand is goodness. And He has power over everything.'

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَيَّ سَيِّدِنَا وَ مَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَيَّ آلِ سَيِّدِنَا وَ مَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ بَارِكْ وَ سَلِّمْ وَ صَلِّ عَلَيَّ

'O Allah! Send blessings upon our master and leader Muhammad, and upon the family of our master and leader Muhammad, and send him salutations and blessings.'

c. Perform an eight *rak'at Nafl* prayer with one *Salām*. In each *rak'at*, recite Sūrah al-Fātiha once and Sūrah al-Ikhlās eleven times. Sayyida Fātima (may Allāh be pleased with her) is reported to have said that whosoever recites this Salāh on the night of Barā'at and dedicates the reward to her, she in return will strongly pray to Allāh for that person's forgiveness before she enters paradise herself.

d. Perform one hundred *rak'ats* of *Nafl* prayers. In each *rak'at*, recite Sūrah al-Fātiha once and Sūrah al-Ikhlās ten times. The Muslim observing this prayer on this night will have tremendous blessings from Allāh and his/her supplications will be answered by Him.

e. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) used to read the following *Du'ā* abundantly on this night and hence we should do the same:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَ الْعَافِيَةَ وَ الْمُعَافَاةَ الدَّائِمَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةِ

'O Allāh! I ask You for forgiveness, well being and continuous healing in this world and the hereafter.'