

# Book 32: *Faḍl Lailat al-Qadr*

## Excellence of *Lailat-ul-Qadr*

*In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

### Ch. 1: Excellence of *Lailat-ul-Qadr*

The word of Allāh: “Surely We revealed it on the Night of Majesty — and what will make you comprehend what the Night of Majesty is? The Night of Majesty is better than a thousand months. The angels and the Spirit descend in it by the permission of their Lord for every affair. Peace it is, till the rising of the morning” (The Qur’ān, ch. 97).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lailat-ul-Qadr* means the Night of Majesty or Power. Allāh says: “Surely We revealed it on the Night of Majesty” (97:1), that is to say, its revelation started on that night. According to Ḥadīth reports, the first revelation came to the Holy Prophet on the 25th of Ramaḍān. In *Fath al-Bārī* forty-six views are recorded regarding *Lailat-ul-Qadr*. In Ḥadīth reports it is mentioned that the Holy Prophet instructed that one should seek it during the last seven nights of Ramaḍān, or more specifically on the 25th, 27th and 29th nights. However, a believer can only find it after intense devotion and worship. The last ten days or the last week of Ramaḍān have been selected for it because, due to fasting, it is the most effective time to undertake spiritual exertions. Again, as it is not night everywhere in the world at the same time, it means that *Lailat-ul-Qadr* occurs at different times for those seeking it in different places.

The descent of the angels and the Spirit is mentioned as taking place during the *Lailat-ul-Qadr*. Their descent is related to the advent of a prophet because angels impel the hearts of human beings towards righteousness and assist his mission of giving birth to spiritual life. So the period of the mission of a prophet can also be called as a *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, as human souls achieve great spiritual heights during that time. In this regard the Qur’ān also says: “We revealed it on a blessed night — truly We are ever warning. Therein is made clear every affair full of wisdom” (44:3–4). Just as this spiritual awakening is related to the life of a prophet, it is also related to

Ibn ‘Uyainah said: Where it occurs in the Qur’ān *mā adrā-ka* (“what will make you comprehend”, as above), it means that Allāh has taught him (the Prophet). Where Allāh says *wa mā yudrī-ka*, it means He has not taught him.<sup>2</sup>

**2014** Abū Hurairah reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: “Whoever fasts during Ramaḍān with faith and seeking the pleasure of Allāh, he is forgiven the sins he committed before,<sup>3</sup> and whoever keeps up (the optional night prayers) in *Lailat-ul-Qadr* with faith and seeking the pleasure of Allāh, he is forgiven the sins he committed before.”<sup>4</sup>

## Ch. 2: Seeking *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in the last seven (nights of Ramaḍān)

**2015** Ibn ‘Umar reported that some Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were shown *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in their dreams in the last seven (nights of Ramaḍān). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “I notice that your dreams concur as regards (*Lailat-ul-Qadr* being in) the last seven (nights of Ramaḍān), so whoever wishes to search for it, let him search for it in the last seven.”<sup>5</sup>

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the appointment of a *Mujaddid* (or Divinely-appointed Reformer). And as, according to a ḥadīth, it is promised that a *Mujaddid* shall appear at the head of every century, *Lailat-ul-Qadr* may also refer to the time during which a *Mujaddid* carries out his mission.

<sup>2</sup> A distinction is drawn here between the perfect tense in *mā adrā-ka*, which occurs in the second verse of ch. 97, and the same expression when used with the imperfect tense as *mā yudrī-ka*. The words *mā yudrī-ka* occur, for example, in the following verse of the Qur’ān: “And what will make you comprehend that the Hour may be near?” (33:63); the meaning being that the Holy Prophet has not been given the knowledge whether or not the Hour is near. See also the same expression in 80:3.

<sup>3</sup> Up to here, h. 2014 is a repeat of h. 38.

<sup>4</sup> The second part of h. 2014 is a repeat of h. 37 with the difference that, while h. 37 speaks of keeping up the optional night prayers “during Ramaḍān”, here it mentions the same “in *Lailat-ul-Qadr*” and the chapter heading is from this.

<sup>5</sup> This shows that *Lailat-ul-Qadr* can only be found and experienced by means of conducting a spiritual search, which means performance of hard spiritual exertion.

**2016** Abū Salamah reported: I asked Abū Sa‘īd (al-Khudrī), who was a friend of mine, and he said: We were observing *I’tikāf* with the Prophet ﷺ in the middle ten days of Ramaḍān. He came out on the morning of the 20th and addressed us saying:

“I have been shown (the date of) *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, but then I was made to forget it, or I forgot it. So search for it in the last ten of the odd (nights). And I saw (in a dream) that I am performing *sajdah* in mud. So whoever has been observing *I’tikāf* with me, he should return.”

So we returned (to observing *I’tikāf*). We did not see any patch of cloud in the sky, and then a cloud appeared and it rained until the roof of the mosque started leaking, and it was made of branches of palm trees. Prayer was called and I saw the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performing *sajdah* in mud so much so that I saw patches of mud on his forehead.<sup>6</sup>

### Ch. 3: Searching for *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in odd (nights) of the last ten

This contains a report from ‘Ibādah.

**2017** ‘Ā’ishah reported that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Search for *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in the odd (nights of the) last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān.”<sup>7</sup>

**2018** Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī reported: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to observe *I’tikāf* in the ten days of Ramaḍān which are in the middle of the month. He would continue till the 20th night and when it was the 21st, he would return to his house and whoever was observing *I’tikāf* with him would also return. One Ramaḍān he continued in *I’tikāf* in the night in which he used to return (home).

<sup>6</sup> This is a briefer repetition of h. 813. That ḥadīth first mentions the Holy Prophet and those with him being in *I’tikāf* in the first ten days of Ramaḍān, which is omitted here.

<sup>7</sup> See h. 2020.

He addressed the people and ordered them whatever Allah wished and then said:

“I used to observe *I'tikāf* in these (middle) ten days, but now it has been disclosed to me that I should observe *I'tikāf* in these last ten days. So whoever is observing *I'tikāf* with me should remain in their places of *I'tikāf*. And I have been shown this night (*Lailat-ul-Qadr*), but then I was made to forget it. Search for it, therefore, in the last ten in every odd night. I saw myself (in a dream) performing *sajdah* in mud.”

Then that night the sky became overcast and it rained. The roof of the mosque started leaking at the place where the Prophet ﷺ was praying. This was the night of the 21st. I saw with my own eyes, and I looked at him, departing after the morning prayer with his face covered with mud.<sup>8</sup>

**2019** ‘Ā’ishah reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: “Seek it (i.e., *Lailat-ul-Qadr*).”

**2020** ‘Ā’ishah reported: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to observe *I'tikāf* in the last ten (days) of Ramaḍān, and he used to say: “Search for *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān.”

**2021** Ibn ‘Abbās reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Seek *Lailat-ul-Qadr* in the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān. It is when nine nights remain, or seven nights remain, or five nights remain.”<sup>9</sup>

**2022** Ibn ‘Abbās reported that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “It is in the (last) ten (nights), when nine have passed or seven remain.” That is to say, *Lailat-ul-Qadr*. Ibn ‘Abbās also reported (through other narrators): Seek it on the 24th.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> This is a repetition of h. 813 with some omissions and additions. This ḥadīth makes it clear that it was the night of the 21st when it rained, and it was *Lailat-ul-Qadr*.

<sup>9</sup> These would be the 21st, 23rd, or 25th nights of Ramaḍān. In some ḥadīth it is the 25th, 27th, or 29th.

<sup>10</sup> What the different statements about which night is *Lailat-ul-Qadr* have in common is that it is an odd night of the last ten nights, i.e., the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th,

#### Ch. 4: Knowledge about *Lailat-ul-Qadr* was taken away due to the quarrelling of some people

**2023** ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit reported: The Prophet ﷺ came out to inform us about *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, but two men from among the Muslims were quarrelling with one another. He said: “I came out to inform you about *Lailat-ul-Qadr* but so-and-so were quarrelling with one another, and it (i.e., news about it) was taken away. It may be that this is better for you. So seek it on the 29th, 27th, and the 25th.”<sup>11</sup>

#### Ch. 5: Greater devotion during the last ten days of Ramaḍān

**2024** ‘Ā’ishah reported: When the last ten days (of Ramaḍān) would come, the Prophet ﷺ used to gird up his loins,<sup>12</sup> keep wake at night (for prayer), and awaken his family (for prayer).

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or the 29th. But here the 24th is mentioned. It may be an error in reporting or what is meant may be the night which comes after the 24th fast has been completed.

<sup>11</sup> H. 49 is repeated here with slight difference of wording.

<sup>12</sup> The expression used is literally: *tighten his waist belt*. The meaning is to be ready and prepared for the exertion required.