

THE EXCELLENCE AND ACTS OF WORSHIP (A'MAAL) FOR (THE MONTH OF SHABAAN & 1st Shaban (01

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Shabaan is a month of high excellence and is dedicated to the Leader of the Prophets (saaw). He used to keep fasts during this month and join it with the month of Ramadhan. He used to say, "Sha'baan is a month dedicated to me. Whoever keeps one fast during my month will definitely go to heaven".

It has been reported from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) that on the commencement of this month, Imam Zainul Abideen (as) would gather his companions and address them, "O my companions, do you know which month this is? It is the month of Shabaan about which the Holy Messenger (saaw) used to say that it is dedicated to him. So keep fasts during this month in the love of your Holy Prophet (saaw) and to attain closeness to your Creator. By Allah in whose hands is my soul, I have heard from my father, Hussein ibn Ali (as), that he had heard from Commander of Faithful (as), that whoever keeps fast during Sha'baan in the love of the Holy Prophet (saw) and to attain closeness to Allah will become a friend to Allah and on the Day of Judgment will be close to Allah by His grace and Paradise will be assured to him."

Sheikh Tusi has reported from Safwane Jammal that Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) asked him to encourage his neighbors and friends to fast in the month of Sha'baan. He asked the Imam if there was any special significance for it, and he replied that when the month commenced, the Holy Messenger (saw) would command his announcer to proclaim in Medina that the Holy Messenger (saaw) wished them to be aware that Sha'baan was a month dedicated to him and Allah bestows mercy on whosoever associates with him in this month by fasting. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) proceeded to report from Commander of Faithful (as) that since hearing the announcement, he never missed any fast during the month of Sha'baan and, Allah willing, hoped not to miss any during the remainder of his life. He added that fasting in the months of

Sha'baan and Ramadhan is a means of repentance and pardon from Allah. Keeping fast on Thursdays of the month also carried great significance. It has been reported that the heavens are decorated each Thursday in the month of Sha'baan and the angels pray to Allah to forgive all those who fast on that day and their prayers are accepted. It is stated in the reports of the narrations of the Holy prophet (saaw) that whoever fasts on Mondays and Thursdays of this month, Allah will fulfill twenty of his worldly wishes and twenty of his wishes of the Hereafter.

It is recommended to give alms in this month even if it is as small as a half date. Almsgiving in this month brings about rescue from Hellfire. In this respect, it has been narrated that when Imam al-Sadiq (a.s) was asked about the merits of observing fasting in Rajab, he answered, "Why do you not ask about the merits of observing fasting in Sha`ban." "What is then the reward of him who observes fasting on one day in Sha`ban, Son of Allah's Messenger?" asked the narrator. The Imam (a.s) answered, "The reward will be Paradise. I swear it by Allah." The narrator then asked again, "What are the best deeds that should be done in Sha`ban." The Imam (a.s) answered, "Almsgiving and seeking forgiveness are the best deeds in Sha`ban. Verily, if anyone of you gives alms in Sha`ban, Almighty Allah will breed that alms in the very same way as you breed your small camels. Hence, this alms will be as huge as Mount Uhud on ".the Resurrection Day

THE FIRST EVE:

Numerous prayers have been reported in "IQBAL" including twelve rakaats with the recitation of the Chapter on Ikhlas eleven times after the recitation of the Chapter on Al-Hamd. It is a day of great excellence and it has been reported from Ja'far Sadiq (as) that whoever fasts on that day is assured of Heaven. Seyyid ibn Tawoos has reported from the Holy Messenger (saw) that a person who fasts on the first three days of this month and on their eve recites two rakaats in each of which he recites after the Chapter on Al-Hamd, the Chapter on Ikhlas eleven times will be greatly rewarded.

In the commentary of the Eleventh Imam (as) great excellence has been reported from the month of Sha'baan and its first day and its many benefits. Thiqatul Islam Noori (May Allah brighten his grave) has translated the reported at the end of this work "KALEM-E-TAYYIB" but as the report is too long to be included here fully, a summary of it is set out:

On a first of Sha'baan Commander of Faithful (as) passed by a group of a people who were seated in a mosque discussing the subject of destiny. Their voices were raised as the arguments were heated and the contentions severe. Commander of Faithful (as) stopped and greeted them. They replied, rose in deference to him and requested him to join them. Without heeding their request, he addressed them, "O people, do not indulge in discussions not beneficial to you. Are you not aware that there are creatures of Allah who, though not dumb or incapacitated, are dumbfounded out of his fear? Whenever they think of the greatness of Allah, their tongues become tied and their hearts feeble, they lose their senses and become confounded by His glory, majesty and magnificence. When they recover from this state, they revert to Allah regarding themselves sinful, though they are distant from sin and error. They are

not content with their ordinary labours of Allah nor do they regard their enormous deeds as plentiful, and constantly engage themselves in efforts for the pleasure of Allah. Whenever you see them in prayer, you will notice them fearful and anxious. How do you compare with them, you the beginners? Are you not aware that the wisest of men are the most quiet and the most ignorant are the most vocal? O fresh people, today is the first of the honoured Sha'baan. Allah

has so named it as the good things (khayraat) are disbursed in this month. Allah keeps open in this month the gates of His benefaction and has made available for you His palaces and benediction for little virtue from you. So purchase them. But the cursed devil (Iblis) has embellished for you his vices and evil and you have always wandered astray and towards rebellion associating with evil and turning away from virtue of which He has opened the gates for you. This is the first of Sha'baan and the branches of its benediction are prayers, fasting, charity, admonishing towards virtue and restraining from evil, honoring the parents, relatives and neighbors, settlement of disputes and charity to the needy and poor. However, you have imposed on yourselves the load you cannot carry of discussing destiny. Enquiry into matters that are in the hands of Allah is not permissible to everybody, for it can lead to being misguided. Beware, if you knew what Allah has in store for the obedient, you would not have been indulging in such discussions but would have been engrossed in the matters prescribed for today.

"They asked, "O Commander of Faithful, what are the things Allah has kept in store this day for the obedient?" he narrated to them the episode of the army the Holy Messenger (saaw) had sent to fight the infidels. It was a dark night and when the infidels planned a night attack, the Muslims were all asleep except for Zaid bin Harith, Abdullah bin Rawaha, Qatadah bin No'man and Qays bin Asim Munqari. Each of them was engrossed in prayers and in recitation of the Holy Qur'an. The enemies shot arrows aimed at the Muslims. As it was pitch dark, the enemies could not see the Muslims to be frightened of its size and got so close to them that they were soon to destroy the Muslims. Suddenly such light beamed from the faces of these few individuals that the whole Muslim army became illuminated. This inspired the Muslims who unsheathed their swords and attacked the infidels killing them or wounding them and taking them prisoners. When they turned to the Holy Messenger (saw) and narrated their encounter to him, he said that the prayers of the their brothers on the first eve of Sha'baan was the cause of the light which illuminated from their faces.

Iblis spreads out his army round the earth urging them to make special efforts to attract the creatures of Allah towards them as Allah spreads His angels on this day round the world commanding them to look after His creatures well and urge them towards virtue and stating

that because of them, the creatures will turn to virtue except for the disobedient and rebellious who would have united with the army of Iblis. On the first of Sha'baan Allah surely orders the Gates of Heaven to open up and the "Tree of Tooba" to bring its branches closer to earth and at that time there is an announcement from Allah, "O creature of Allah, these are the branches of the "Tree of Tooba", cling to them as they will lift you to Heaven and these are the branches of the "Tree of Zaqoom", beware of them lest they lead you to Hell". The Holy Messenger (saaw) said, "By the one who has appointed me to the Prophet hood, whoever adopts any virtue on this day will have clung to a branch of the branches of the "Tree of Tooba" which will take him to heaven and whoever adopts evil on this day will surely have clung to a branch of the .branches of the "Tree of Zaqoom" which will take him to fire

"Tree of Tooba" & "Tree of Zaqoom";"

Whoever will recite optional prayers on the first of Sha'baan for the pleasure of Allah will have clung to one of its branches, whoever will keep fast on this day will surely have clung to one of its branches, whoever will reconcile between husband and wife or father and son or among relatives or neighbours or other people will surely have clung to one of the branches, whoever helps one in debt or reduces it has clung to one of the branches, whoever checks his accounts and discovers a debt due to him of which the lender has lost hope of repayment and he settles the debt, he will surely have clung to one of the branches, whoever stands surety for an orphan will surely have clung to one of the branches, whoever protects the dignity of a believer from the foolish has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever recites the Holy Qur'an or a portion of it has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever remembers Allah and counts His blessings and expresses his gratitude has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever visits a sick person has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever acts virtuously towards his parents or one of them has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever on this day pleases someone he had angered in the past has also surely clung to one of the branches, whoever joins in a funeral has surely clung to one of the branches, whoever on this day comforts a distressed person has surely clung to one of the branches and, likewise whoever does any good on this day has surely clung to one of the branches.

The Holy Messenger (saaw) said, "By the one who has appointed me to Prophet hood, whoever on this day indulges in the evil or sin will have surely clung to one of the branches of the "Tree of Zaqoom" which will pull him to the fire of Hell. By the one who has sent me as a Messenger, whoever becomes negligent with his obligatory prayers on this day will surely have clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever is approached by a weak or poor person of whose

condition he is aware and is able to assist him without any harm to himself, and there is none other than him to help the poor, yet leaves him to collapse without holding his hand, then surely he has clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever, on receiving an apology from one who had wronged him, exacts from him punishment in excess of what is just for the wrong then surely he has clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever causes separation between husband and wife or parent and children or between brothers or brothers and sisters or relatives or neighbours or two friends or two sisters, he has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever is aware of the hardship of a person, yet becomes hard on him and worsens his plight by anger, has surely also clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever is indebted but denies the debt and endeavors to invalidate it, has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever molests an orphan, causes him trouble or destroys his property has clung to one of the branches of that tree.

Whoever transgresses on the reputation of a brother believer and causes people to dislike him, then has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever sings in such a manner that people indulge in sins, has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever sits and narrates his evil deeds and oppression during a war and takes pride in them, has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever has a sick neighbour but does not visit him as he regards him lower than himself has clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever fails to join in the funeral of a neighbour only because he regarded him base, has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever turns away from a distressed person and regarding him base oppresses him has surely clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever has been disowned (disinherited) by his parents or either of them, has also clung to one of the branches of that tree. Whoever has been disowned (disinherited) by his parents and despite being able to please them does not do so on this day, then he surely has clung to one of the branches of that tree and, likewise, whoever does any form of evil has surely clung to one of the branches of the "Tree of Zaqqum".

By the one who has sent me as a Messenger, the branches of the "Tree of Tooba" will elevate those who have clung to them towards Heaven." At that time the Holy Messenger (saaw) raised his eyes for a few moments towards the sky and looked pleased and then lowered his sight to the earth but looked displeased and turning to his companions said, "By the one who has sent Muhammad as a Prophet, I have surely seen the "Tree of Tooba" raise itself and raise all those who had clung to it towards Heaven and saw some of those who had clung to one or more of its branches, according to the degree of their obedience. I surely saw Zayd bin Harith clinging to a number of the branches and the branches were elevating him to the highest place

in Heaven. So I became pleased. Then I lowered my sight to the earth. By the one who has sent me as a Messenger, I then saw the "Tree of Zaqoom". Its branches were lowering themselves towards Hell and all those who had clung to one or more of its branches as a result of their ill deeds. I surely saw some of the hypocrites clinging to a number of the branches which were
".carrying them to the lowest abyss in a hell. So I became displeased