

NIGHT OF GLORY

The Hadyah Author has also mentioned the *dogana* [two *rak'aat namaz*] of the 27th of Ramazan as a proof of his false allegation about the so-called abrogation of *Shari'at*. **He says**, "In addition to the obligatory ritual prayers [*namaz*], he [Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}] made obligatory a sixth *namaz*, namely the *dogana* of the 27th of Ramazan."¹

We say: We think it expedient to deal with this issue in some detail so that the readers know all the facts about it. Allah Most High has bestowed a night to the *Ummat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, in His infinite Mercy. It is called the *Lai'lat-ul-Qad'r* [**The Night of GLORY**]. Its excellence and magnificence is manifested in the Chapter 97 of Quran, **THE GLORY**. It is as follows in translation:

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"Surely We have sent it (the Quran) down on the Night of GLORY.

"And what will make thee understand what the Night of GLORY is?

"The Night of GLORY indeed is higher (in Divine estimation) than a thousand months.

"Therein descend the angels and the Spirit by the permission of their Lord (with directives) in respect of every affair.

*And it is all peace till the break of morn."*²

In the technical parlance '*Ulama-e-Usool* [scholars of the fundamental principles], this is called the *Ibarat-an-Nass* [Categorical Quranic Injunction]. Hence, the essential meaning of these verses is the need of the prayers of this night. That Allah Most High has manifested the importance of the prayers of this night is tantamount to commanding the prayers of this night, because when a ruler praises an act it means that he wants that act to be performed or to persuade [his subordinates] to perform that act. Conversely, when the ruler makes adverse comments about an act, it is understood that he prohibits that act. There are many such precedents in the Holy Quran.

In the Traditions too a large number of excellences of the Night of GLORY have been mentioned. For instance, Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said:

- "The past sins of the person who maintains his Faith and, on the Night of GLORY, offers prayers for divine rewards will be forgiven."³
- "The past sins of the person who prays on the Night of GLORY and achieves it would be forgiven."⁴
- "The past and future sins of the person who maintains his Faith and prays on the Night of GLORY for achieving divine rewards will be forgiven."⁵

It is found that Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} used to perform his prayers with great deliberation during the last ten days of the month of Ramazan. He also used to bring together all the members of his family and say his prayers. Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqah^{RZ}⁶ narrates:

¹ *Hadyah-e-Mahdaviah*, Abu Raja Muhammad, 1293 AH Edition, p.28.

² Quran, Chapter 97, *Al-Qadr (THE GLORY)* SAL .

³ *Bukhari, Kitab-as-Saum, Bab-at-Tarhib fi Qiyam Ramazan*, and Muslim, *Kitab-as-Salat*.

⁴ *Kanz-al-'Amaal*.

⁵ *Ibid*.

■ “When the last ten days [of the month of Ramazan] started, Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} used to pray during the night. He used to wake up the members of his family and persuade them to join him in prayers.”⁷

■ “Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} used to say his prayers more in the last ten days [of Ramazan] than other days and make more efforts for it.”⁸

Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani^{RA} quotes Hazrat Abu Zar Ghaffari^{RZ} about the practice of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} during the last ten days [of Ramazan]:

■ “Hazrat Abu Zar Ghaffari^{RZ} has narrated that on the 23rd night of Ramazan, Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} made us say our prayers for a third of the night. On the 24th night he did not come. On the 25th night, he came out and made us say our prayers until midnight. We humbly suggested, ‘It would have been better if you had made us say our prayers for the whole night.’ He replied, ‘When a person stands with the *imam* for the *namaz* and ends his *namaz* with the *imam*, he gets the [divine] rewards for the prayers of the whole night.’ On the 26th night, Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} did not come out. However, when the 27th night arrived, he assembled us and the members of his family. Then he made us say our prayers so long in the night that we were afraid we might miss the *sahari* [pre-dawn meals during the fasting month of Ramazan].”⁹

Despite the excellences of the Night of GLORY being described, the Holy Quran has not determined when it will fall: on which night of which month. There is no definite and clear mention about its day and month even in the Traditions. Only equivocal words about it are found in them:

“Wait for the Night of GLORY in the last ten days of Ramazan.”¹⁰

“[Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} said], ‘In the last week [of Ramazan].’¹¹

“Search for it in the remaining ten days.”¹²

“Search the Night of GLORY in the last ten days of Ramazan. I had seen it. Then I was made to forget it. Hence, search for it in the odd nights of the last ten days.”¹³

In short, the Night of GLORY has not been fixed in clear and definite terms. Hence, all from the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, to their followers and the followers of their followers, the *imams* of *ijtihad*, the exegetes, the *imams* of traditions—all appear to be of different views. Some have said that this night rotates throughout the year and that it comes in one month. Some others have held that it comes in some other month. Some concede that it comes only in the month of Ramazan. Even those who concede that it occurs in Ramazan, greatly differ on its date; as such Hazrat Imam Nowawi^{RA} has written in the book, *Sharah-e-Muslim*, as under:

“Qazi holds that there is difference of opinion regarding the Night of GLORY. One group holds that it shifts. It occurs in one month in one year and in the next year, it shifts to another month. Similarly,

⁶ Wife of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.

⁷ *Sahih Muslim, Bab-al-Ijtihad fil ‘Ashr-al-Awakhir min Ramazan.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ghaniyat-at-Talibin, Fasl Salat-at-Taravih.*

¹⁰ *Sahih Muslim.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

it shifts every year. There could be comparison from this; and it could be said that there is no inconsistency among the Traditions about the Night. Malik, Sori, Ahmad, Ishaq and Abu Sor have held this opinion. Others have said that it rotates in the last ten days of the month of Ramazan. Some others hold that it shifts in the whole of Ramazan. Some hold that it is the same night every year and that it never shifts. And so on and so forth. It is also said that it is in the whole year. Ibn Mas'ud^{RZ} and Abu Hanifa^{RZ} and both their disciples hold this view. Ibn Umar^{RZ} and a group of the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} adhere to the opinion that this Night is in the month of Ramazan. Some say that this Night falls in the second or the third ten days of Ramazan. Some others say that it falls in the last ten days of Ramazan and on the odd nights of those days. Some others say that this Night falls on the even nights of the last ten days of Ramazan, as it has been said in the *hadis* of Abu Sayeed. It is also said that it is the 23rd or the 27th night, and this is the saying of Ibn Abbas^{RZ}. It is also said that it should be searched in the 17th, or 21st or 23rd night. Hazrat Ali^{RZ} and Ibn Mas'ud^{RZ} have narrated that it is the 23rd night. A number of the Companions^{RZ} subscribe to this view. It is also said that it is the 24th night. Hazrat Bilal^{RZ}, Hazrat Ibn Abbas^{RZ}, Hasan, Qatada hold this view. It is also said that it is the 27th night. A group of the Companions^{RZ} holds this view. Zaid Ibn Arqam^{RZ} and Ibn Mas'ud^{RZ} narrate that it is the 17th night. It is also said that it is the 19th night. Ibn Mas'ud^{RZ} has narrated this. A similar narration has come from Hazrat Ali^{RZ}. The last night of the month is also narrated by some.”

The difference of opinion in fixing the date is being proved by these sayings. A single Companion^{RZ}, or a follower or a *mujtahid* has said many things. There is no reason to prefer the saying of one person to that of the other because all these sayings appear to be based on their surmises, which are useful in conjecture. However, none of them is definite and unequivocal that could be final and certain. Further, in the belief of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at*, not all these are innocent and infallible. In addition, there is no reason to prefer one against the other.

This difference of opinion and the suspense about the fixing of the Night of GLORY turned into finality and certainty when Allah Most High informed Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} that the Night of GLORY was the 27th night of Ramazan. Further, His command also arrived that in thanksgiving of the Divine Grace that manifested in the form of a definite and certain date of the Night of GLORY, Hazrat Imam^{AS} and his followers should perform two *rak'at* [cycles] of *namaz*. In obedience to the divine command, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} revived the *Sunnat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad Mustafa^{SLM}, assembled his family members, and performed the two-*rak'at namaz* in congregation of the Companions^{RZ} present on that night. In addition, for the rest of his life, he performed it every year. As such, all the Mahdavis perform this ritual prayer in obedience to the command of Allah Most High and in the emulation of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} as a *Farz* [obligation]. This is the *Namaz-e-Laylatul Qadr* or the *Dogana-e-Laylatul Qadr*, which the Hadyah Author considers as the abrogation of the *Shari'at*. However, if one were to ponder over its being made obligatory, its philosophy and its benefits, it becomes obvious that the meanings of its being made obligatory is that on this Night one should essentially perform the two-*rak'at namaz* in addition to the daily regular and routine *Farz* and *Sunnat* prayers.

If one were to consider the relevant and minor details of this issue for the sake of critical appreciation of the claim of the abrogation of *Shari'at* made by the Hadyah Author, the following points emerge for consideration: ● 1. The fixing of the Night of GLORY, ● 2. The saying of the prayers on the Night of GLORY, ● 3. The fixing of the two-*rak'at namaz*, ● 4. Considering them as *Farz* [obligatory and essential]—none of these issues lead to the abrogation of *Shari'at*.

■ 1. The first issue cannot be considered as the abrogation of the *Shari'at* under the rules of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at*. As such, the Companions^{RZ}, their followers, the followers of these followers, the imams of *ijtihad*, the exegetes and others have fixed the date of this Night, according to their knowledge. This cannot be called the abrogation of the *Shari'at*. In addition, none among the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at* would brand these eminent authorities as those who have repealed the *Shari'at*. They have fixed the date of the Night of GLORY according to their light. Similarly, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has fixed the date of the Night in accordance with information given by the Almighty that it was the 27th night of Ramazan. This does not lead to the abrogation of the *Shari'at* because there is no difference based on essence of the fixing or determination of the date. If there is a difference, it is that this is an *Ilham-e-masoom* [the Divine Inspiration given to an innocent sinless person by Allah] and to the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at*, the *Ilham-e-masoom* is definite and final.

The scholars of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at* also concede that a person of the choice of Allah Most High can find the Night of GLORY with certainty every year. Hence, Hazrat Imam Nowawi^{RA} writes in his book, *Sharah-e-Muslim*, Chapter on the excellence of the Night of GLORY:

“Know that the Night of GLORY does exist as we have explained earlier in the beginning of the Chapter. Whomsoever Allah Most High wills, he will know of this Night every year in Ramazan. It will appear to him, as these Traditions conclusively prove it. Further, the narratives of the virtuous people having seen the Night are found in a very large number.”

■ 2. The saying of *namaz* during the Night of GLORY is neither objectionable to any Muslim nor any Muslim can call it the abrogation of *Shari'at* because this is the perfect obedience of the intention of the Quran and the practice of the Prophet^{SLM}.

■ 3. The fixing of the two-*rak'at* also is not prohibited in the Islamic commands because the rule is that the application of the absolute issue is on the least quantity. The term *namaz* applies to two-*rak'at* that is the least quantity. Less than two-*rak'at* is not called *namaz*.

To accept it as a *Farz* [obligation] will not necessitate the abrogation of the *Shari'at-e-Muhammadiyah* under the principles of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at* based on many rational and traditional reasons. For instance, achieving the definite and final knowledge of the *Laylatul-Qadr* from Allah Most High is His great bounty for us and cause of gratitude on our part. Under the Quranic Verse, “...Give Me thanks, and be not ungrateful.”,¹⁴ thanking Him for the great favour is *Farz* [obligation].

There are many ways of expressing gratitude and thanks. Making the two-*rak'at* prayers to express gratitude an obligation is not repugnant to the commands of Quran. On the contrary, it is in perfect consonance with the *Sunnat* [practice] of the Prophets^{AS} from the point of view of the Islamic commands. Some of the Traditions prove that some Prophets^{AS} have performed every one of the five daily ritual prayers to express their gratitude for the Divine bounty. Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani^{RA} has written in his book, *Ghaniyat-at-Talibin*, as under:

“It is narrated in some of the Traditions that a person from among the *Ansar* [Helpers of Madina] asked Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, ‘Who has said the *Maghrib* [post-sunset] prayers for the first time?’ Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} informed him, ‘The first to say the pre-dawn prayers was Hazrat Adam^{AS}. Hazrat Ibrahim^{AS} was the first to perform the early afternoon [*Zuhr*] prayers when Allah Most High saved him from the fire of Namrood [Nimrod]. Hazrat Yaqub^{AS} [Prophet Jacob] performed the late afternoon [*Asr*] prayers when Hazrat Jibrail^{AS}

¹⁴ Quran, S. 2: 152 SAL.

[Gabriel] gave him of the glad tidings about Hazrat Yusuf^{AS} [Prophet Joseph]. Hazrat Dawood^{AS} [Prophet David] performed the *Maghrib* [post-sunset] prayers when Allah Most High accepted his repentance. Hazrat Yunus^{AS} [Prophet Jonah] performed the 'Isha [night] prayers when Allah Most High brought him out of the bosom of the fish." [It is obvious from this Tradition that each of the Prophets has performed their respective ritual prayers in gratitude for the bounty of Allah Most High].

We have quoted the sayings of the eminent authorities of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at* earlier. They prove that the *zath* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} is the Vice-Regent of Allah and free from error. The Tradition, "He (the Mahdi^{AS}) will follow in my footsteps and will not err," confirms it. Hazrat Imam^{AS} used to receive his (divine) knowledge directly from Allah Most High and the soul of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM}. The basis of the religious commands of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} is not opinion and guess. Instead, they are the commands of Allah and His Messenger^{SLM} and the real *Shari'at-e-Muhammadiyah*. In view of his extraordinary position, which is specific to all Vice-Regents of Allah, Hazrat Imam^{AS} made the performance of the *dogana* of *Laylatul-Qadr* an obligation under the command of Allah Most High. Then, the performance of these prayers is essentially a *Farz*.

Even if one were to ignore the rare and unique position of the Imam^{AS} and its peculiarities, and discuss the issue on the basis of the sources of all the religious commands of Islam, it is obvious that the *muj'tahids* [jurists entitled to independent opinion] are not free from error according to the unanimous opinion of the religious authorities. The followers of these jurists concede that there is possibility of error in their opinions. Despite this, these jurists are entitled to categorise a given act as obligatory or some other act as undesirable or prohibited. In addition, their followers think those actions to be obligatory, unlawful, and undesirable in accordance with the explanations of their jurists. We have given some examples earlier. There are many more similar other examples that can be quoted. Since the sources of all these commands are the Quranic Verses and Traditions, no one can say that they are repugnant to the Verses and Traditions or they abrogate the *Shari'at-e-Muhammadiyah*.

Hence, the exoteric aspect of this issue too is the same. The excellence of the *Laylatul-Qadr* and the implied command to worship during this night is proved from the Quranic Verses. The Traditions are eloquent about the excellences of the worship on this night and emphatic insistence on its performance. Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} himself is narrated to have performed the worship on this night with great care and remarkable aplomb. In view of all these imperatives, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} decreed the worship of this night as a *Farz* [obligation]. On the contrary, the other imams and *mujtahids* held that it was *Mustahab* [desirable]. When the formulations of the other imams and the *mujtahids* are not considered repugnant to the Islamic commands and are not deemed to abrogate the Quranic Verses and the Traditions, this command of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} too is neither repugnant to the Islamic commands nor it abrogates them, because even this command is extracted from the same sources.

Now the suspicion that remains to be addressed is that making the *Dogana* of *Laylatul-Qadr* a *Farz* is tantamount to adding a sixth *namaz* and that this leads to the abrogation of *Shari'at-e-Muhammadiyah*. This suspicion is misplaced because the command that is based on the principles of *Shari'at* and is extracted from them does not lead to the abrogation of *Shari'at*. Otherwise, as we have written earlier, the controversial issues of the imams, 'ulama and *mujtahidin* too would have to be treated as abrogating the *Shari'at*. However, none concedes it and none can concede it. Further, making it an obligation does not revoke any command of the *Shari'at* and it does not lead to any alteration or amendment of the *Shari'at*.

Apart from this, the ‘*Ulama of Usool* have clarified that the addition of the sixth *namaz* is not the abrogation. It is written in *Tauzih Talwih*, the famous book on *Fiqh*, as under:

“There is disagreement on the issue whether an addition to the clear command [of the Quran] is abrogation or not. If the addition is a regular ‘*ibadat* [prayer] as a sixth *namaz* there is unanimity that such an addition is not abrogation and there is no dispute over it.”

Even if, as the Hadyah Author contends, the *Dogana* of *Laylatul-Qadr* is accepted as the sixth *namaz*, it does not lead to the abrogation of *Shari’at* under the rules of the ‘*ulama of Usool*. As a result, the Hadyah Author’s showing it as an argument in favour of his contention about abrogation becomes wrong.

Having tidied over all these stages, we now bring a clear example of a sixth *namaz* to the attention of the readers. It is exoterically similar to the *namaz* of *Laylatul-Qadr*. The imams of *Ijtihad* disagree about the nature of the *namaz* of *Witr*. Imam Shaf’ie^{RA}, Imam Malik^{RA} and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal^{RA} contend the *Witr namaz* as *Sunnat*. Imam Azam^{RA} holds it to be *Vajib*. Among the disciples of Imam Azam^{RA}, Imam Abu Yusuf^{RA} and Imam Muhammad^{RA} have decreed it as *Sunnat*. Imam Zafar^{RA} contends that it is *Farz*, contrary to the opinions of all the others. As such, Shaikh Akmaluddin Muhammad Babarti^{RA} writes in his book, ‘*Inaya Sharah-e-Hidaya*, as under:

“There is no clear and unequivocal narrative about the *Witr namaz*. However, Yusuf bin Khalid Sahmi has narrated from Abu Hanifa^{RA} that it is *Vajib* and this is the *mazhab* of the Imam exoterically. Nuh bin Abi Mariyam has narrated from the Imam that it is *Sunnat*. Abu Yusuf^{RA}, Muhammad^{RA} and Shaf’ie^{RA} have adopted this view. Hammad bin Yazid has narrated from the Imam that *Witr* is *Farz* and this is the *mazhab* of Zafar.”¹⁵

It is obvious that *Witr* is a *namaz* that it is not mentioned in Quran. Its performance is not mentioned in the Quran even as an implied command. The Traditions are silent in fixing its particular nature. There are various narratives from Imam Azam^{RA}. There is no clear and definite narrative. There is no proof that Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} has fixed the number of *rak’aat* [cycles] for the *Witr namaz*. The narratives even say that Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} has performed only one *rak’at* [cycle] of this *namaz*. It is because of this that Hazrat Imam Shafe’i^{RA} holds that one can perform one to eleven *rak’aat* of this *namaz*. However, Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} has fixed only three *rak’aat* of this *namaz*. He has also said that it is *Vajib*, as against the contention of the Three Imams (Imam Shafe’i^{RA}, Imam Malik^{RA} and Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal^{RA}). Imam Zafar^{RA} contends that it is *Farz*. Should we say, in the words of the Hadyah Author, “Two hundred years after Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} had added a *Vajib* sixth *namaz* and Imam Zafar^{RA} had added a sixth *Farz* *namaz* in addition to the five *Farz* prayers that it is a new *Shari’at* and that it abrogates the *Shari’at-e-Muhammadiyah*”. Further, would saying so be correct?

If saying so is not correct—it is definitely not correct—the fixing of two-*rak’at* *namaz* of *Laylatul-Qadr* and knowing it as *Farz* too would not be a new *Shari’at* or the abrogation of the *Shari’at-e-Muhammadiyah*. Besides, there a difference between the Imam^{AS} who decreed the *Laylatul-Qadr namaz* as *Farz* and those who decreed the *Witr* as *Vajib* or *Farz*. The difference is that the Imam^{AS} is free from error or sinless, while the others are not free from error or sinless.

¹⁵ The Chapter on *Witr*.

Excerpt from the book:

KUHL AL-JAWAHIR

LI ARBAB AL-BASA'IR

[KOHL OF PEARLS FOR LORDS OF INSIGHTS]

VOLUME 1

PART 1

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BELIEFS

*

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