

VIRTUES OF THE SACRED MONTH OF MUHARRAM

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PREFACE

The following information has been excerpted from *Al-Ghunya li-Taalibi Tareeq al-Haqq* by Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be pleased with him); translated from the Arabic by Haaji Muhtar Holland into Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth. (Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., Florida, 1997) – Volume 3, pages 278-290. Some traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been taken from direct texts of Hadeeth.

Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be pleased with him) is one of the greatest scholars and Saints of the Islamic tradition, and the fountainhead of the Qadri Spiritual Order. He was born in the Iranian district of Gilan, south of the Caspian Sea, in 470 Hijri (1077-8 CE). Having lived a life of extreme piety, sacrifice, service, and devotion to Allah Almighty and His Messenger ﷺ, he passed onto the Realm of Divine Beatitude on the 11th of Rabi-uth-Thani, 561 Hijri (1166 CE). He rests in the city of Baghdad, Iraq. His blessed mausoleum is a place of pious visitation from devotees around the world.

The intent of this brief document is to bring to the attention of our readers the great spiritual benefits of these blessed nights and days, and to encourage them to derive these benefits by practicing the prescribed acts of worship.

We welcome your feedback and comments.

Thank You.

IECRC Staff



In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful
Prayers and Peace upon His Noble Messenger ﷺ

FASTING IN MUHARRAM

Muharram is the 1st month of the Islamic calendar and is one of the four sacred months, the other three being Rajab, Dhul-Qa'dah & Dhul-Hijjah, the 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islamic lunar calendar, respectively. It is a month of great significance, and mercy from Allah ﷻ as related by the following sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah ennoble his countenance) is reported as having stated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

“In Allah’s Sacred Month [al-Muharram], Allah ﷻ has relented toward certain people, and He ﷻ will also relent toward others.”

It has been reported by Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

“If someone observes a day of fasting during Muharram, for every such day he will be credited with thirty days.”

Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) is also reported as having stated that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“If someone fasts on the last day of Dhul-Hijjah and on the first day of Muharram, he will have sealed the old year with fasting, and ushered in the new year with fasting, and Allah ﷻ will grant him the atonement [kaffara] of fifty years.”

It has also been reported by Hazrat Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“The most meritorious fasting after the month of Ramadan, is [fasting in] the month of Allah ﷻ which they call the Sacred Month [al-Muharram]. And the most meritorious ritual prayer after that which is prescribed as an obligatory duty, and that which is performed in the middle of the night, is the ritual prayer of the day of ‘Ashura.”



YAUM-UL-'ASHURA, AND THE ACTS RECOMMENDED ON THIS GREAT DAY

The sacred month of Muharram includes *Yaum-ul-'Ashura* or the Day of 'Ashura, which according to most experts is its 10th day. Allah ﷻ enormously enhances the recompense of those who worshipfully obey Him ﷻ on this day.

Fasting

It is reported in Sahih Muslim that:

“It [i.e. fasting on the Day of 'Ashura] expiates the sins of the preceding year.”

It is also reported in Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Hazrat Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that the Jews of Madina used to fast on this day because they considered it a good day, the day on which Allah ﷻ rescued the Bani Israel from their enemy. So Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام used to fast on this day. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, *“We have more claim over Moosa than you.”* So the Holy Prophet ﷺ observed fast on that day and ordered the Muslims to observe fast on that day.

It is also reported in Sahih Muslim and Abu Dawood on the authority of Hazrat Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that :

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ fasted on the day of 'Ashura and ordered the people to fast on it. The people said, 'O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, it is a day that the Jews and Christians honor.' The Prophet ﷺ, said, 'When the following year comes - Allah willing - we shall fast on the ninth.' The death of the Prophet ﷺ came before the following year.”

So it is recommended to fast on the 10th of Muharram and the 9th along with it as well.

It is reported by Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) that the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“If someone fasts on the day of 'Ashura in Muharram, he will be granted the spiritual reward of ten thousand angels. If someone fasts on the day of 'Ashura in Muharram, he will be granted the spiritual reward of ten thousand martyrs, as well as the spiritual reward of ten thousand pilgrims and visitants.”

Being Kind to Orphans

The above Hadeeth continues as follows:

“If someone strokes the head of an orphan with his hand on the day of ‘Ashura for every hair on the orphan’s head, Allah ﷻ will promote him by one degree in the Garden of Paradise.”

Providing Iftar to the Fasting Person

The above Hadeeth further continues:

“If someone provides a believer with a meal to break his fast on the night of ‘Ashura, it will be just as if the entire Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ had broken fast as his guests, and had filled their stomachs to capacity.”

Significant Events that Took Place on Yaum-ul-‘Ashura

The Holy Prophet’s ﷺ listeners exclaimed upon listening to the above Hadeeth that it would seem that Allah ﷻ has given preference to the Day of ‘Ashura over all other days! He ﷻ replied in the positive and went on to explain:

“Allah ﷻ created the heavens on the day of ‘Ashura. He ﷻ created the mountains on the day of ‘Ashura. He ﷻ created the oceans on the day of ‘Ashura. He ﷻ created the Pen on the day of ‘Ashura. He ﷻ created the Tablet on the day of Ashura. He ﷻ created Adam ﷺ on the day of ‘Ashura, and He ﷻ caused him to enter the Garden of Paradise on the day of ‘Ashura...” (Please refer to the source text for the entire Hadeeth, which is quite extensive.)

Performing Ghusl

According to another version of the above mentioned Hadeeth, likewise transmitted by Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both), the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

“ ... If someone performs the major ritual ablution on the day of ‘Ashura he will never experience any illness, apart from the sickness of death...”

Visiting the Sick

The above Hadeeth continues as follows:

“...If someone pays a visit to a sick person on the day of ‘Ashura, it is just as if he had visited all the sons of Adam. If someone gives [a thirsty person] a drink of water on the day of ‘Ashura it is just as if he had never disobeyed Allah ﷻ for a single instant.”

Ritual Prayer for Yaum-ul-‘Ashura

The above Hadeeth continues explaining the method of ritual prayer to be performed on the Day of ‘Ashura:

“If someone performs 4 cycles of ritual prayer on the day of ‘Ashura reciting in each cycle Surah Al-Fatiha one time, Surah Al-Ikhlās 50 times, Allah Almighty will forgive him the sins of fifty bygone years and of fifty years that are still in the future. Allah Almighty will also build for him, in the midst of the heavenly host, a thousand palaces of light.”

Another Hadeeth narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه has the following prescription:

“[The worshipper should perform] 4 cycles of ritual prayer with two salutations (i.e. in sets of 2) reciting in each cycle:

- *Surah Al-Fatiha, one time*
- *Surah Az-Zilzal, one time*
- *Surah Al-Kafiroon, one time*
- *Surah Al-Ikhlās, one time*

Then when he has concluded his performance of the ritual prayer, he should invoke blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ seventy times.”

Being Kind to Dependants

It is reported by Hazrat ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud al-Hudhali رضي الله عنه, one of the earliest and closest Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“If someone treats his dependants with special generosity on the Day of ‘Ashura, Allah ﷻ will treat that person with special generosity throughout the rest of the year.”

Giving Charity

One of our worthy forefathers (*Salaf*) is said to have declared:

“If someone fasts on the Day of ‘Ashura, he will thereby make up for all the fasting that he has failed to keep in the course of the whole year. And if someone gives a charitable donation on that day, he will thereby make up for any charitable donation [sadaqa] that he has failed to give in the course of the whole year.”

Fasting of the Birds & Beasts

Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mentions in his book that even the birds and the wild beasts used to fast on the Day of ‘Ashura.

The Martyrdom of Imam Al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both)

In discussing the special qualities of the Day of ‘Ashura we cannot fail to mention that Imam Al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was slain on this day in the year 680 CE / 61 Hijri. However, a detailed mention of this event is the topic of another document.

DUA

We pray that Allah, Most Glorified and Exalted is He, by the *waseela* (connection) of His Beloved Prophet (Prayers and Peace be upon Him) increases our understanding of the significance of this great month and accepts our worship therein. May He forgive our faults and make us true servants of His Noble Friends (Awliya Kiram, may Allah be pleased with them all). Aameen.



Please handle this document with care and respect as it contains Allah's ﷻ and His Beloved Prophet's ﷺ Names.