



UNDERSTANDING THE VIRTUES OF SHABEENAH



It has always been the practice of virtuous Muslims to perform 'Shabeenah' during the Holy month of Ramadaan i.e to complete the entire Holy Qur'an in either one, two or three days. This is permissible and a means of reward on condition that the Holy Qur'an is not read so hastily that its words are not pronounced correctly or that the recitation is not done with laziness. Some misled corrupt people say that Shabeenah is Haraam. Hereunder we will learn about the basis and virtues of Shabeenah.

Allah Ta'ala says to His Beloved Rasool (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "O Beloved enwrapped in a sheet! Stand the entire night except for some part of it, half the night or a little less, or a little more, and recite the Holy Qur'an with modulation (Tarteel)." [Surah 73, Verses 1-4]

In this verse, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is ordered to perform Namaaz approximately the entire night. In the beginning of Islam, making Ibadaat the entire night was Fardh (compulsory), with just a small part of it being allowed for rest. The obligation was annulled a year later, but its preferability still remains. So whoever remains awake the entire night or sleeps very little acts upon this verse. It should be born in mind, however, that only he who can recite the Holy Qur'an properly should make Shabeenah, as deduced from the instruction of Tarteel.

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Abbas (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) mentions that once, in the Salaah for lunar eclipse (Salaat-ul-Khusoof), Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) extended his standing (Qiyaam) equal to the recitation of approximately Surah Baqarah. We learn that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) recited Surah Baqarah (2 ½ Paras) in Salaat-ul-Khusoof. In Shabeenah, at the most 1 ½ Paras are read in each rakaat, so if 2 ½ Paras are proven to have been read by Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in one standing, 1 ½ would definitely be permissible.

Hazrat Huzaifa (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) reports a long Hadith about the Namaaz of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). His last words were that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) performed 4 rakaats of Tahajjud Salaah. In these, he recited Surah Baqarah, Surah Aale Imran, Surah Nisa, Surah Ma'idah and Surah Anaam. [Abu Dawood] Here we see that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) recited approximately 8 Paras in 4 rakaats of Tahajjud Salaah. In other words, the Beloved Habeeb (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) read approximately 2 Paras in each rakaat. Why then would the Shabeenah be Haraam in which only a maximum of 1 ½ Paras is read?

Hazrat Mugheerah ibn Shu'ba (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) has stated, "In the Namaaz of the night, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stood in it so much that his feet became swollen. When he was asked why he strives so much whereas, through him, his Ummatis' former and latter sins have been forgiven, he answered, "Shouldn't I be a grateful bondsman of Allah Ta'ala?" [Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim] This Hadith establishes that to exert yourself in Ibadaat is the Sunnah of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). If a Mu'min's (Believer's) feet become swollen in Shabeenah, he is fortunate to have attained this Sunnah.

These Ahadith prove that remaining awake for the better part of the night, performing Namaaz, making Qiyaam (until even the feet become swollen) and reciting 2 ½ paras of the Holy Qur'an in

one rakaat, is the Sunnah of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), while reciting the entire Qur'an in one or two nights or even in one rakaat is the Sunnah of the blessed Sahaabah. The practice of the Sahaabah is recorded in the following manner, "One group amongst them completed the Holy Qur'an in one day and night, another completed it twice whilst others finished it thrice. Those who completed it in one rakaat are countless." [Mirqaat]

Some corrupt people quote the Hadith from Mishkaat Shareef in which Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated, "Whoever recites the Holy Qur'an in less than three days will not understand it," as a justification for Shabeenah being prohibited.

In this Hadith, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is referring to the general public. Usually when Huffaaz complete the Holy Qur'an in one or two days, they are not able to understand it. Mulla Ali Qari (Rahmatullah Alaih) further states, "The truth is that this command is different in relation to the diversity of people". [Ibid] Those who have the ability are excluded from this, for example Hazrat Uthman Ghani (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) and other Sahaabah would complete the Holy Qur'an in one rakaat. Sher-e-Khuda Sayyiduna Ali (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) used to start reciting the Holy Qur'an when putting his left foot in the stirrup of his horse's saddle and finish reciting the entire Qur'an before putting his right foot in the other stirrup. [Fataawa-e-Razaviyya] In Mirqaat it has been stated that some Pious Predecessors used to complete the Holy Qur'an in one day and night whilst others would complete eight. Ala Hazrat Imaam Ahle Sunnat Imaam Ahmad Raza Khan (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) states that Imaam-e-Azam Sayyiduna Imaam Abu Hanifa (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) recited the entire Qur'an in one rakaat every night for 30 years. [Fataawa-e-Razaviyya] In fact, Shaikh Abu Madyun Maghribi (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) used to complete the Holy Qur'an 70 000 times during a single night! Once, he completed the entire Holy Qur'an between kissing the Hajar-e-Aswad and approaching the door of the Holy Ka'bah. Those around him heard every single word of it. [Mirqaat]

Furthermore some people argue that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not perform Shabeenah therefore it is a bad innovation. Firstly, in the initial period of his life, the entire Qur'an was not revealed yet. Its revelation was completed just before he left this mundane world. Secondly, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had mercy on his Ummah by not doing so. If he continuously practiced Shabeenah, it would have become a necessary Sunnah upon us. Thus, Shabeenah was made by his Sahaabah afterwards in the same way that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not always perform Taraweeh but the Sahaabah did with Jamaat later on.

Lastly some people claim that in Shabeenah people recite and listen to the Holy Qur'an in laziness while others are sleeping, therefore this is disrespect to the recitation and therefore it is impermissible. Some people solemnly attend Shabeenah to listen to it, standing and listening attentively. Some come merely to see it and remain seated. There is nothing wrong with this. Listening to the Holy Qur'an is Fardh-e-Kifaaya and therefore listening by only some is sufficient. And for arguments sake, if it is accepted that all the Muslims listen to Shabeenah in laziness, effort should be made to remove the laziness, not to stop the Shabeenah. Today there are many sins committed in weddings, such as dancing, music, fireworks, etc. Does that mean that people must stop getting married?! If there are lice in your hair, you do not set flame to your scalp, you remove the lice.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the Taufeeq to increase our Qiyaam and Ibaadat in His Court during the blessed nights of Ramadaan, Allahumma Ameen.

[Compiled from Jaa'al Haqqu Wazahaqal Baatil by Hakeemul Ummat Mufti Ahmad Yaar Khan Naeemi Rahmatullah Alaih]